

**The Training of Isabella I of Castile
as the Virgin Mary**
by Churchman Martin de Cordoba in 1468

GOVERT WESTERVELD



**The Association of the Virgin Mary with
the French Chess Piece “Dame”**

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(c) Govert Westerveld

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to Egbert Meissenburg Seevetal, renowned chess historian, bibliographer, and head of the Initiative Group Königstein (IGK), who wanted to trace the origin of chess with the participation of international experts. His work has been of great importance for the historiography of chess.



Preface

The filmmaker Agustí Mezquida of the Catalonia Autonomous Community made his own chess history to promote his film *La Dama dels Escacs* (The Chess Lady) that was partly financed by CulturArts of Valencia. He made his own hypothesis of chess history and so we saw the following text figure in most Spanish newspapers¹ on 17 November 2014:

It is in the allegorical poem *Scachs d'Amor* dated 1475 and by three Valencian authors where the appearance of the dama (lady) in the game is mentioned for the first time, which would rule out that this piece was inspired by the figure of the queen Isabella I of Castile.

Agusti Mezquida considers that the appearance of the dama (lady) in *Scachs d'amor* (1475) could be more related to Maria of Castile (1401-1458), the consort of Alfonso the Magnanimous (1396-1458). However, this unfortunate queen was disowned by her husband for thirty years and she never was more important than Alfonso the Magnanimous. On the contrary the king did not mention her in his testament and had children by Lucrecia de Alagno (ca. 1430-1479) whom he could not marry. Although the king requested to marry Lucrecia, Pope Calixto III did not agree to repudiate his wife Maria de Castile.

Those who know the chess history are well aware that the weak piece known as *dame* (lady) was used as queen in chess in France for several

¹ See:

<http://www.elmundo.es/comunidad-valenciana/2014/11/17/546a0da1e2704e08268b458e.html>

centuries, so the statement that the *appearance of the dama (lady) in the game is mentioned for the first time* is not true. Other newspapers followed Mezquida and arbitrarily changed certain words, and so we see the following text² appearing on www.thinkspain.com on 6 December 2014:

The allegorical poem *Scachs d'Amor* written jointly by three authors in 1475 in an early form of Catalán, the language spoken on the east coast of Spain and which evolves into Valenciano between the provinces of Castellón and Alicante, mentions the queen for the first time, proving that she was not, as originally believed, based upon Isabella I of Castile. Scriptwriter and director Agustí Mezquida believes it more likely that the chess queen was based upon María of Castille, consort of King Alfonso the Magnanimous, although chess expert Marilyn Yalom of Stanford University in the USA believes that the chess queen does not come from one specific figure, but from several ones, since centuries ago queens began to play a much greater role in governing.

A similar notice appeared in the ABC newspaper on 8 March 2014. Suddenly the work of José Antonio Garzón Roger who confirmed my hypothesis of the new powerful chess queen, and my own research of the latest 25 years were made to look worthless. Fortunately José Antonio Garzón Roger contacted ABC citing the history of the actual development of the new powerful lady in chess and ABC amended Mezquida's article of March 8 2014 to the one of March 11 2014:

These facts are documented and researchers with José Antonio Garzón at the helm are aware that Vicent's work helped popularize the new power acquired by the queen (or queen) at the times of Isabella I the Catholic, although other influences are mentioned, such as Maria de Castilla and other western monarchs. In any case, that alferza piece known until then, limited in move, became the most powerful on the board - a transcendent event that had already echoed the poem *Scachs d'amor* from 1475. Garzon

² See:

<http://www.thinkspain.com/news/versionimprimir.asp?x=34tger634sdg34&y=5346345645634&CodNoticia=25214>

in particular considers that the figure of Isabella I of Castile as a real model of the new chess lady enjoys international consensus. "It is the Dutch researcher Govert Westerveld who studied and credited the issue" he says.

Today most chess historians agree that the weak chess queen, named "dame" in France as from the XIV century, changed to a powerful chess queen in Spain in 1475. Around this year we also see a change of the weak bishop to a strong bishop, according to the chess poem *Scachs d'amor*. In order to strengthen our hypothesis of Isabella I of Castile (Isabel la Católica) against the unforeseen hypothesis of the filmmaker Mezquida we have written a book about the new bishop and a book about *Scachs d'amor* in English³.

Till the appearance of Mezquida's film it was not necessary to emphasize the complete study of Prof. Joaquín Petzold from Berlin affected in 1994 concerning the Virgin Mary, "Dame" and Isabella I of Castile in relation to the chessboard in Spain. However, seeing these new unforeseen circumstances of an odd Valencian Queen it is necessary to put right this filmmaker's erroneous idea, because it is abolishing our chess research of the latest 30 years. Concentrating now on Virgin Mary in relationship with Isabella I of Castile we observe that the Augustinian monastic Martín de Córdoba⁴ wrote in 1468 the work *El Jardín de las donzellas*. It was directed to Princess Isabel I of Castile with the intention to contribute to her education as future Queen. Córdoba was the first writer who draws equivalencies between Isabella I of Castile and Virgin Mary⁵, which became one of her standard portrayals.

³ **WESTERVELD, Govert** (2015) *The Birth of a New Bishop in Chess*. ISBN: 978-1-326-37044-2

WESTERVELD, Govert (2015) *The Poem Scachs d'amor (1475) First Text of Modern Chess* ISBN: 978-1-326-37491-4

⁴ **CÓRDOBA, Martín Alonso de** (1468) *El Jardín de las donzellas*

⁵ **SÁNCHEZ DUEÑAS, Blas** (2001) *Una particular visión de la mujer en el siglo XV: Jardín de nobles doncellas de Fray Martín de Córdoba*. In: *Boletín de la Real Academia de Córdoba* 141, pp. 291-299

Since we consider the work of Prof. Petzold to be a very important study on the development of the new powerful dame (lady), I enclose his German article as well as the English translation at the end of the book.

After our research we detected that the work *El Jardin de las donzellas* was a book that figured in the testament of Leonor Álvarez, the wife of Fernando de Rojas who wrote (?) *La Celestina*. Furtheron we detected that the printed work of 1501 was the work of Lucena. Consequently we see again the conection between Juan Ramírez de Lucena and Isabella I of Castile.

Hopefully our latest three studies this year will now be enough to prove that the new powerful chess queen was fully based on the Castilian Queen Isabella I, years thereafter called Isabel the Catholic.

Govert Westerveld

VAL VALDIVIESO, María Isabel del (2006) Isabel la Católica y la educación. In: Aragón en la Edad Media, Nº 19, pp. 555-562

TABLE OF CONTENTS:

The author’s preface	V
1. The poem <i>Sachs d’amor</i> and Isabella I of Castile	01
2. Isabella I of Castile as the Virgin Mary on the chessboard	31
3. Isabella I of Castile, the new powerful Dama in Chess	76
5. Bibliography	116



Isabella I of Castile

CHAPTER I.

THE POEM *SCACHS D'AMOR* AND ISABELLA I OF CASTILE

The first preserved text about modern chess is the poem *Scachs d'amor* from the XV century. This poem is the first document in which the new *dama* or *queen* appears in the history of chess for the first time. Despite having stated in my last book of 2004 that Queen Isabella had influence on the creation of the powerful new *dama* in the origin of draughts and modern chess, historians of chess and draughts were not taking it seriously and several had reservations about it. Therefore a study of the text *Scachs d'amor* cannot be absent in this book, especially now that we have the results of sensational research by historian José Antonio Garzón Roger at hand.

As Ramon Miquel i Planas (1874-1950) warned in 1914, the real importance of the poem *Scachs d'amor* would not be known until we had a serious study done by a real expert in chess. This work had been done for years by my friend Dr. Ricardo Calvo (1943-2002) whose book⁶ was written in 1999 with the foreword by his friend José Antonio Garzón, another expert in the history of chess and who now continues in the footsteps of Dr. Calvo. Garzon had actively helped Calvo with personal communications in the analysis of this poem.

⁶ **CALVO, RICARDO** (1999) *El Poema scachs d'amor* (siglo XV). First preserved text about modern Chess. Analysis and comments by Ricardo Calvo. Editorial Jaque XXI, S.L. – Madrid, with prologue by José Antonio Garzón Roger

Dr. Ricardo Calvo was aware of my book and my hypothesis, but our paths separated in 1997 when I decided to deal fully with the history of my wife's village of Blanca that lies in the beautiful Ricote Valley and which was the last greatest place in Spain where the moriscoes remained in the year 1613. The inhabitants were expressing the need for knowing their history yearly in their festival book of August, but until 1997 nobody was writing about it. So I decided to do that and after one year I had written a nice book of 900 pages. Despite Ricardo's unsuccessful attempts to convince me to continue with the history of draughts I left this project because I needed a break after 10 years of continuous research. Calvo knew a lot about the history of Spain and he surely knew that in Spain the queen was an exception for Europe where queens could not govern in the fifteenth century⁷. In stanzas X-XIII of the book *Scachs d'amor* Calvo⁸ referred to my hypothesis and briefly said: "The choice of the term was most likely influenced by the figure of Queen Isabella the Catholic", but inexplicably he does not speak in his book on the new strength of the "queen" or "dama" piece that I also attribute to queen Isabella⁹. On the other hand he did not forget to mention¹⁰

⁷ **A historic amateur asked Calvo:** "I have a couple of questions that you might be able to help me with. I remember reading about a law that was made during the Renaissance that did not allow a woman to be the primary ruler". **Calvo replied:**

"According to the archives of our tribe women were excluded from inheritance of the crown in most European kingdoms because of the so-called "Salic law" officially adopted in France in the 13th century. It still applies to the Spanish monarchy, for instance. The name comes from the Sals, a tribe established in France before Charlemagne".

<http://www.goddesschess.com/chessays/calvotributepart3.html>,
2.12.2000

⁸ **CALVO, RICARDO** (1999) El poema *Scachs d'amor*. (Siglo XV). Análisis y comentarios por Ricardo Calvo. Pág. 65

⁹ **WESTERVELD, GOVERT** (1994) *Homo Ludens, Der Spielende Mensch IV*. Internationale Beiträge des Institutes für Spielforschung und Spielpädagogik an der Hochschule Mozarteum Salzburg, Salzburg.

my discovery of the word “dama” in Nebrija’s dictionary of 1495, which also took me much time to determine the actual date of the original dictionary of Nebrija¹¹, which according to some historians was from 1492 and according to others from 1495. Calvo knew a lot about the history of Spain and he surely knew that in Spain the queen was an exception for Europe where queens could not govern in the fifteenth century¹². The odd thing is that Calvo at first did not rule out that the new rules in chess of those years could

Page 104 says: His movement, which until then was between adjacent squares spread over the entire board. This new capability or "power" of the queen appears to be linked, according to my studies, with the influence on all areas of social, cultural, and political-military at the time, held by the figure of Queen Isabella the Catholic.

¹⁰ **WESTERVELD, Govert** (1997) De invloed van de Spaanse koningin Isabel la Católica op de nieuwe sterke dame in de oorsprong van het dam- en moderne schaakspel. Spaanse literatuur, jaren 1283-1700, p. 217

¹¹ However, the words we find in the dictionary of Nebrija, 1495, are the most interesting ones:

Alquerque Calculorum ludus

Andarraia Calculorum ludus **NOVUM**

Dama es casi señora Domina-ae **NOVUM**

In the dictionary of 1495 **NOVUM** (new) is printed separately and the meanings of these words are new. So as a result of the new dama the long dama with long strokes was definitively introduced at that time in the game of chess. As for the dates, this all harmonizes with the three treaties about the new powerful dama in the game of chess (1476 Scachs d’amor, 1495 Franchesch Vicent, and 1497 Lucena).

¹² **A historic amateur asked Calvo:** “I have a couple of questions that you might be able to help me with. I remember reading about a law that was made during the Renaissance that did not allow a woman to be the primary ruler”. **Calvo replied:**

“According to the archives of our tribe women were excluded from inheritance of the crown in most European kingdoms because of the so-called "Salic law" officially adopted in France in the 13th century. It still applies to the Spanish monarchy, for instance. The name comes from the Sals, a tribe established in France before Charlemagne”.

<http://www.goddesschess.com/chessays/calvotributepart3.html>,
2.12.2000

have been derived from the cultural atmosphere created by the powerful new queen Isabella of Castile where the queen played a prominent role, at least as important as her husband Ferdinand of Aragon. But Calvo ended by saying that this is and will remain a matter of speculation¹³.

However, when he wrote the introduction to my book of 1997 he told me that he did believe in this possibility. So the issue is confusing, because Calvo did not continue this line of research. Perhaps there were other elements in his Research that suggested abandoning this line of investigation. I know he had very strong friendship with the German chess historian Egbert Meissenburg who wrote the following about Calvo¹⁴:

"He (Calvo) has demonstrated and warranted that modern chess can only come from Spain, with new figures of the dama and the bishop. At birth of chess [queen] France and Italy honored her. He found evidence in the history of the ancient printers and a certain Valencian circle of intellectuals. And this reason (one of many others) convinced me, though not, for example, the version that the modern chess dama is a strong female personality (Isabella the Catholic, as his friend Govert Westerveld, a historical draughts researcher, defends. "

¹³ **CALVO, RICARDO** (1991) Birthplace of Modern Chess. New in Chess, Alkmaar (Holanda)

¹⁴ The translation of the German text is from Jose Maria Gutierrez Dopino. The original text that I received at the beginning of 2003 is in an occasional bulletin (Okkasionellen Rundbrief of OGK) of the Initiative Group Königstein. With respect to the birth of the new powerful dama in Valencia Meissenburg and Calvo Valencia wrote two articles together:

CALVO UND MEISSENBURG "Valencia, Geburtsstätte des modernen Schachs". Schach-Journal (1992), N° 3, pp. 34-46

CALVO UND E. MEISSENBURG "Valencia und die Geburt des neuen Schachs". IFK (Internationales Forschungszentrum kulturwissenschaften). Wien. 1995, pp. 77-89

Meanwhile in the year 2003 the historian Joseph A. Garzon had written a splendid book about the lost book of Francesch Vicent printed in Valencia in 1495, demonstrating with tremendous research that the book actually existed and that there must be an original book somewhere in the world. This does not surprise me at all, because Spain has lost many jewels due to certain interests we never will understand. Therefore, seeing that Mr. Garzón knows the Valencian language because he is a native of Valencia and an expert in the history of chess, who better than he could check in 2003 in necessary depth the text of the poem *Scachs d'amor* taking as base¹⁵ the influence of Queen Isabella of Castile?

Garzon had already devoted himself to love the poem *Scachs d'amor* in chapter of his book¹⁶, and had helped Calvo with personal communications, i.e., Garzon was very familiar with this poem and he was the suitable person to bring many obscure points to light. So I talked at length with him on this issue, both of us agreeing on the fact that there were many things still unclear even today, but we have always taken as base that both the name of the piece (queen) and the new movement of the queen had to do with the influence of Queen Isabella and that there must be metaphors in the poem *Scachs d'amor* in this sense, because the poem is the original text of modern chess.

¹⁵ As base I refer to my book of 1997: “La influencia de la Reina Isabel la Católica sobre la Nueva Dama Poderosa en el Origen del Juego de las Damas y el Ajedrez Moderno” (The influence of Queen Isabella the Catholic on the New Powerful Dama in the Origin of the Draughts and Modern Chess Game).

¹⁶ **GARZÓN ROGER, José Antonio** (2001) En Pos del incunable perdido. Francesch Vicent: Llibre dels jochs partits dels schachs, Valencia, 1495. Edited by the “Biblioteca Valenciana”. In chapter 4 entitled “Scachs d’amor, la otra gran aportación Valenciana” the poem is amply discussed.

The great virtue of Garzón in research is his open mind and enormous analytical capacity¹⁷ enabling him to research things to infinite depth. On the other hand his desire to join forces could never be without consequence and the result was that the sun was suddenly visible behind the clouds of centuries in the *Scachs d'amor* poem, a handwriting text full of metaphors. The chess historian José Antonio Garzón investigated, found hard evidence, and confirmed that the influence of the Catholic Queen Isabella, crowned Queen of Castile on 13 December 1474, was the true inspiration for this new kind of chess of the new powerful dama, both in creation of the name of the piece *dama* and in the creation of the new force of the queen.

But it is important that we know more of this Valencian poem and nobody better than Garzón, evoking his cited book:

In 1905 the priest Ignasi Casanovas broke the news of his finding in the Royal Chapel of Palau in Barcelona of a manuscript whose collective authorship consists of three writers, all from Valencia and well known in the late fifteenth century: Francesc Castellvi, Narcís Vinyoles, and Bernat Fenollar. This unpublished poem by the end of that century carried the title of *Scachs d'amor* and was written in the Valencian language. José Paluzié, then a remarkable bibliophile and key author in the early stages of the Spanish chess historiography, was the first to highlight the importance of the manuscript. However, even a man as rigorous, honest, and indefatigable researcher as he was could not take the necessary steps to escape the daily obligations. Probably the time in which he lived prevented it. Shortly thereafter, in 1914, the eminent bibliographer Ramon Miquel i Planas realized in *Bibliophilia*, a comprehensive analysis of the manuscript, translating it into Castilian¹⁸.

¹⁷ This is something that chess and draughts players have in common.

¹⁸ **GARZÓN, JOSÉ A.** (2001) *En Pos del incunable perdido*. Francesch Vicent: Llibre dels jochs partits dels schachs, Valencia, 1495. Editado por la Biblioteca Valenciana. pp. 147-148

The *Obres e Trobes* (the first book printed in Spain in 1474 in Valencia) is an art competition held on March 25 of that year. There are many poets who have poems and couplets in this art competition, and we find our three earlier mentioned poets among them¹⁹. The *Obres e Trobes* is considered to be the first literary work printed in Spain of which the only known copy in the world is preserved in the University Library of Valencia. It consists of 60 leaves without foliation and signature and is written in Roman letters on paper with hand and star watermark. The three poets, as we see, already knew each other. Seeing the relationship they had with King Ferdinand and knowing his passion for the game of chess, there may be another thing they thought about around 1475. It was time to change the figure of the queen on the chessboard and inform the King by means of their poem in the form of a manuscript. Finally in 1475 Isabella of Castile was queen with more power than her husband and she let this fact be known to the whole world. Anyway apart from this event, she by no means ceased to respect her husband at all times. Some months earlier, on October 4 1474, her implacable enemy, the Marquis of Villena died. Then King Henry was soon forsaken and friendless, quickly became sick, and died on December 12 1474. The next day Isabella was crowned Queen of Castile.

It was a political decision of fait accompli that would provoke the war between Isabella and her supporters against her opponents. Isabella emerged victorious in the struggle for the throne and later during the field battle. She won people for her cause not only for her modern war machine, but also for her great propaganda machine as a tool of

¹⁹ **PASTOR FUSTER, Justo** (1827) Biblioteca Valenciana., Servicio de repro-ducción de libros, Librerías “Paris-Valencia”, 1980. P. 52

war²⁰. The Queen was then twenty-three years old, had a beautiful and majestic figure, and was dressed in white brocade and ermine from head to toe. When Ferdinand learned by a letter of Carrillo about the coronation of his wife, he was angry because the sword of justice had been brought before the Queen²¹. It was not customary in Aragon or Castile to carry the sword before the queens. In Aragon the *Salic Law* was also in effect which excluded women from the throne. Fernando evidently thought, despite the marriage convention terms with Isabella, that he would be the king of Castile after the death of King Henry IV²². Calvo thought the poem had been written in the period between 1470 and 1790. On the contrary, Garzon wanted to lean more toward the year 1474, because the jump of the

²⁰ **AZCONA, Tarsicio** (1964) *Isabel la Católica. Estudio crítico de su vida y su reinado*, Madrid, p. 153

²¹ **VAL VALDIVIESO, María Isabel del** (1991) *La sucesión de Enrique IV*. In: *Espacio, tiempo y Forma. Historia Medieval*, p. 50. She states:

A few days before the feast of Corpus Christi held that year on June 13 the rebels organized the spectacular deposition of Henry IV on June 5, 1465. The montage, apart from being colorful, had great political effect from the point of propagandistic view: On a stage prepared for this purpose the rebeldes proceeded to divest the real attributes of a doll representing the King who was finally driven from the throne, falling to the ground. Then these attributes of power were given to Alfonso who was proclaimed king. His supporters call him Alfonso XII. The responsible persons of this act knew perfectly what they were doing. The use of a doll dressed in the attributes of royalty clearly represented the king, and to popular opinion it was the King without any doubt. This was a message that the Spaniards of that time could easily grasp. But in the "Farce of Avila" there are still other elements (cleverly highlighted by Professor Mackay) explaining their political efficacy and immediate popular success: with the help of an effigy of the king the rebels were removing his attributes of royalty one by one, and these were subsequently handed over to Alfonso who in turn would receive the crown, sword, scepter, and throne to be finally hailed as king.

²² **WALSH, W.T.** (1963) *Isabel la cruzada*. Colección Austral, Espasa Calpe, S.A., pp. 44-46

King was at a much earlier stage closer to Lucena and due to the explicit and novel references. Beside that it was also the year of the Marian contest. However, Isabella was not queen until the end of 1474. On the other hand, we cannot forget that the book of Caxton²³ was printed in 1474-1475, so I discarded the period 1470-1474. Consequently it was necessary to look for evidence in the poem. I started from the idea that in the poem should be metaphors that can determine a date and I was right. The result was that the poem *Scachs d'amor* was written by the poets²⁴ after 1474, because as we have seen, precisely on December 13 Isabella was crowned queen in the Alcazar of Segovia. Moreover, the sword of justice had been taken before the queen. The Poets say it clearly in their verse 54:

But our game still wants to adorn itself with a new and surprising style for mainly the Queen's dignity is enhanced as she is given the sword, the scepter, and the throne, because, before all, the Queen requests her honour. She is worthier and the most achieving one. She strolls with ease through the entire field without straying for fear or anger. The greater her freedom, the more she should fear being made captive".

Something unusual in the life of a woman in the fifteenth century, but the poem says it clearly and there is no error:

²³ **WESTERVELD, GOVERT** (1997) La influencia de la reina Isabel la Católica sobre la nueva dama poderosa en el origen del juego de las damas y el ajedrez moderno, p. 218. In the paragraph on the origin of large (powerful) Dama in the chess and draughts game I stated that "The figures in the chess game are the same ones as in Cessolis based on real life" or as Garzon better says, "a mirror of life." The famous English printer William Caxton printed a second book in Bruges in 1474, others say 1475. It was "The game and playe of chesse," from the book of Ludo Scacchorum of Jacobus de Cessolis through the Frenchman Vignay French Jehan, completed in 1474.

²⁴ Most likely the poets could get a copy of Caxton's book as Bruges had active trade relations with Valencia for export of cloth and import of citrus fruits. Even Spanish colonies had established themselves there.

the Queen's dignity is enhanced as she is given the sword, the scepter, and the throne, and this was precisely the major finding of Garzon which I meant when I spoke with him, telling him there should be metaphors in the poem in relation to the queen.



The Chess book of Caxton, 1474 – 1475

Garzon with his nose for discovery did not make any mistake and found various proofs, so his important findings deserve a separate chapter. As in real life, the queen's husband Fernando had less power than his wife, so it was appropriate to investigate whether the poem also said something to this effect on the King. I was lucky with verse 54:

Therefore, since it is said that she is the most worthy and the most achieving one, she may stroll with ease through

the entire field. This is something that I already had expressed years ago²⁵. On the other hand Queen Isabella was in all parts of her territory. So that was another important point to verify in the poem. I was lucky²⁶ with stanza 28:

“The great Queen, proclaiming the beautiful name of Love, command to come to that part, crossing plains and mountains on a horseback for conquering and gathering her troops”. In my book of 1997 I wrote something similar²⁷:

"The support of the church seemed decisively to defeat Alfonso V. Isabella was actively involved in the recruitment of soldiers and rode long distances on horseback for preparing the final battle".

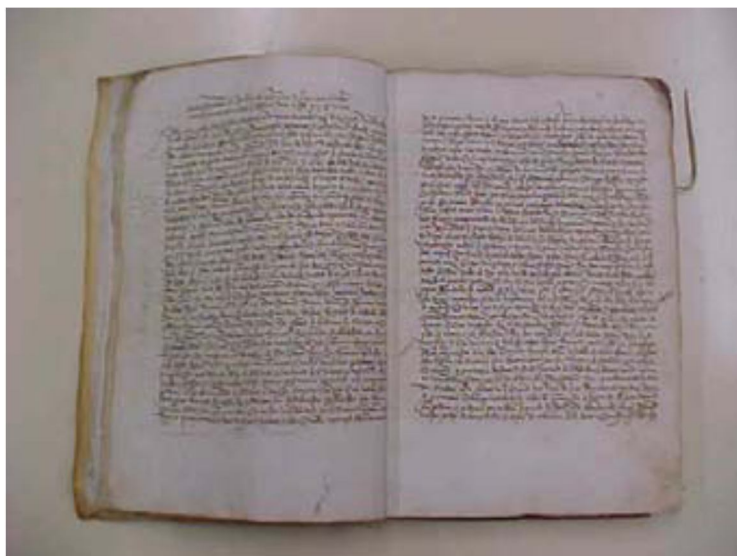
"It makes no difference, it's all the same", Isabella and Fernando alike." ("Tanto monta, monta tanto, Isabel como Fernando"). On 15 January 1475 Isabella and Fernando signed

²⁵ WESTERVELD, GOVERT (1997) La influencia de la reina Isabel la Católica sobre la nueva dama poderosa en el origen del juego de las damas y el ajedrez moderno, p. 30. Translation of the Dutch page: Queen Isabella, unlike what happened in other countries, had more power in the Kingdom of Castile than her husband Fernando. By marrying Fernando had to sign an agreement that accepted the laws and customs of Castile. To that end he had to be established in Castile, of which the kingdom he could only leave with his wife, the Queen's approval. Appointments and designations also required his wife's approval. (WALSH, W.T. (1963) Isabel la cruzada. Colección Austral, Espasa Calpe, S.A.)

²⁶ Garzón discovered metaphors in stanzas 1, 54, 57, 60, and 63. Thereafter he sent me the Spanish translations by Ramón Miquel i Planas (1874-1950) in 1914.

²⁷ WESTERVELD, GOVERT (1997) La influencia de la reina Isabel la Católica sobre la nueva dama poderosa en el origen del juego de las damas y el ajedrez moderno, p. 32. Cf. (WALSH, W.T. (1963) Isabel la cruzada. Colección Austral, Espasa Calpe, S.A.)

the agreement of Segovia in which the divisions of powers between the two monarchs is clearly stipulated²⁸.



**The Act of Proclamation of Queen Elizabeth I of Castile in Segovia
on December 13, 1474**

(Courtesy of the Municipal Archives of Segovia, Leg. 207-1, fol. 10v ff.)

The usurping Isabella is now "Queen of Castile" and her husband received the title of King. Ferdinand of Aragon, who was elected by the heart of Isabella, but with whom she did not share the throne, was relegated to the role of King Consort. However, Isabella was smart enough to sit him beside her and to let him know with firm smoothness who

²⁸ For more data about this important agreement one can consult: **SUÁREZ FERNÁNDEZ, Luis** (1989) *Los Reyes Católicos. La conquista del Trono*, Madrid, pp. 75-94 and **AZCONA, Tarsicio de** (1986) *Isabel la Católica*, Madrid, pp. 197-203. The text of this agreement (Concordia de Segovia) is in: AGS, Patronato Real, leg. 12, and also in: **DORMER, Diego José** (1683) *Discursos varios de Historia, con muchas escrituras reales antiguas y notas de algunas de ellas*, Zaragoza, pp. 295-302

had the power and who decided. In this competition she was taking all imaginable precautions to prevent the absorption of power by the Aragoneses²⁹, seeing that the marriage at this time had only one daughter.

As from that moment the two Monarchs would form a block that was impossible to divide. Fernando inherited the throne of Aragon four years later after the death of his father so that Castile and Aragon joined in 1479 and formed the basis of the total reunification³⁰ of Spain becoming a unified kingdom both politically and religiously and many achievements were obtained by this marriage since they came to power. But let us return to 1475. In May of that year, only 5 months after the accession to the throne, Isabella learned that Alfonso V had crossed the Portuguese border with a troop of 20,000 soldiers and marched towards Palencia. He had civilly married his niece, the Spanish Joanna la Beltraneja and thought he had the right to erect as king of the Kingdom of Castile and Leon.

Joanna was the daughter of the Castilian king Henry IV and Joanna of Portugal, his second wife. The Courts of Toledo had proclaimed her to the throne. However, during a noble uprising two years later without strong evidence people accused her mother of adultery and that Joanna in fact was the daughter of the Queen's favorite, Beltran de la Cueva, the 1st Duke of Albuquerque (which explains the nickname Beltraneja). In 1468 there came an end to the revolt by

²⁹ **TORRE, ANTONIO DE LA** (1955) Vida y obra de Fernando el Católico. Cited by Ramón Menéndez Pidal, Historia de España, tomo XVII. La España de los Reyes Católicos, p. 13

³⁰ King Ferdinand issued a document on April 14 1481 by which Isabella got the Crown of Aragon in the same way of powers that King Ferdinand had. See **TORRE, Antonio de la**: "*Isabel la Católica corregente de la Corona de Aragón*", In: *Anuario de Historia del Derecho Español*, 1953, pp. 423-428.

means of the Guisando Pact by which Henry IV was recognized as successor to his sister Isabel (later Queen Isabella). But two years later (Val de Lozoya) a confrontation between the siblings (Isabella married Ferdinand) was the cause that King Henry IV would again recognize the rights to the throne of Joanna.



Joanna la Beltraneja (1462 – 1530)

Then Queen Isabella gave Ferdinand complete absolute power (equal to equal), invalidating almost all distinctions of the earlier declaration except the point that gave full possession of the Crown to the women³¹. Fernando gave great importance to this document, sending a copy of it to his father on 11 May 1475. In fact, and from this moment, Fernando accessed the full real power of Castile³².

The matter was not clear at all and disturbing. Isabella had lost her old friend Archbishop Carrillo who had deserted her and was now with the enemies. People in Castile said:

³¹ **DORMER, DIEGO JOSÉ** (1683) Discursos varios de Historia, Zaragoza, pp. 302-305. Cited by por Ramón Menéndez Pidal, Historia de España, tomo XVII. La España de los Reyes Católicos, p. 13

³² Presumably the poets of the poem *Scachs d'amor* were aware of the text of this power when they wrote stanza 60, where the queen and king equal each other.

"He who has his hand to the Archbishop will win." Carrillo for his part said: "I removed her from the spinning wheel and gave her a scepter, now I will take away the scepter and bring her to the spinning wheel again". The poets of *Scachs d'amor* were without a doubt aware of the Archbishop Carrillo's movements who years ago was very much in favour of Isabella and suddenly took a position against Isabella, helping Alfonso V and Joanna la Beltraneja. So the poets in verse 9 warn the Queen, "*And so Will, lady of high dowries, must take great care with whom she goes into battle. And remaining the lowest being more important, she should retire for rebuilding the game;*"

We can understand from the text that the poets considered Queen Isabella to be a woman of high dowries. The first time that the dama was discussed in the poem is in stanza 5 where the term "gentle lady" (dama gentil) is used, which poets often used in those years. The marquis of Santillana, Juan de Mena, and others used the term of "gracious lady" (gentil dama). The poets of *Scachs d'amor* speak in their verses about love, fire of love, lover, etc. and the supremacy of the lady (lady of such high dowries) is one of the characteristic features of this love. Queen Isabella was the idealization of women towards lady (Dama) for the poets.

With all this we mean to say that the term "dama" here has nothing to do in this case with the term "guy de dames" of France that was found in an XIII century French manuscript and was also found in the manuscript *Civis Bononiae* of the XV century. We mention this because Dutch historians purport that the word "dama" – referring to the game of chess and draughts - is etymologically of French origin and therefore the game of draughts is a French invention. I disagree completely with this view. I have always said that the word "dama" as known in Spanish chess and draughts

game has developed independently in Spanish, thus regardless of France.

In other words the origin of the term "dama" is French and no one doubts this, because we know that this word was also used in French Chess manuscripts from many centuries ago. However, the existence of the word "dama" in chess in Spain, in the sense of new powerful piece, was not borrowed from France, but had to do with the idealization of women to Lady and Queen Isabella was an example of such idealization. Before the appearance of the manuscript *Scachs d'amor* the word "dama" was not used in Spain. Precisely the three poets introduced the term "dama" to the chess game in Spain due to the new power of the piece and never due to a French chess manuscript. With the poem *Scachs d'amor* we finally have the proof for that in this sense.

Returning to the 20,000 Portuguese soldiers who marched in the direction of Palencia, Isabella logically defended her legal rights and quickly gathered thousands of soldiers in Toledo and took the lead with armor in the style of the French Joan of Arc. Isabella was lucky to be there with Cardinal Pedro González de Mendoza, a very skilled man in those days. He was a son of the famous poet and military, the Marquis of Santillana. The Cardinal, like his father, was well educated, a charismatic personality, an experienced soldier, and a witty and impenetrable politician. In the first phase of the war Alfonso V had won a clear victory. The Portuguese monarch had settled firmly on a territory so vast that his stay in Castile was ensured during the winter of 1476. The poets knew that the "Agreement of Segovia" discussed the Succession to the Crown and they were aware of the role to be played by Aragon in the future government.



Isabella and Ferdinand (Castile and Aragon)

This matter requires clarification, as the father of King Ferdinand King John II of Aragon did not see the issue of succession in case of death of the Castilian Queen Isabella. In April 1476 the Castilian Court swore in Madrigal as heir to Princess Isabella, of which the conditions of text did not have the approval of King John II, because the position of King Ferdinand was not clear in case of Queen Isabella's death³³. This topic recurred during Isabella's entire reign. It is logical to presume that King John II was well informed about the oath and it is clear that the poets were also aware of this whole matter.

This is better understandable if we clarify what happened with the birth of the desired boy on June 20 1478. Then, especially in Aragon, jubilation was everywhere.

³³ **FRANCISCO OLMOS, José María de** (1995) Juan II de Aragón y el nacimiento del Príncipe Juan. Consejos políticos a Fernando el Católico. In: *En la España Medieval*, N° 18, Madrid, 1995, pp. 241-251
FRANCISCO OLOS, José María de (2002) La sucesión de los Reyes Católicos (1475-1504). Texts and documents. In: Cuadernos de Investigación Histórica. Seminario "Cisneros", 2002, 19, 19, pp. 133-134

Moreover, the councilors of the city of Barcelona wrote a letter to Don Fernando congratulating him and predicted that the new baby was the unification "united dels e Senyoria regne." This shows that there was not only a Unionist circle in the Court of Castile or around Ferdinand, but that this idea had also spread through large segments of the bourgeoisie of the Crown of Aragón³⁴, among which were our three poets.

However, Ferdinand and Isabella's army had to be organized well due to the Portuguese king's hesitant behavior.

King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella of Castile succeeded in reducing the Portuguese army in Toro³⁵ on March 1 1476. The battle of Toro was not just a military victory, but more a political victory, because it resolved the civil war in favor of the Catholic Monarchs. And we think that the date of

³⁴ **FRANCISCO OLMOS, José María de** (1996) La última intromisión de Juan II en la Política castellana. In: las Actas del XV Congreso de Historia de la Corona de Aragón. El Poder Real en la Corona de Aragón (siglos XIV-XVI), Part I, volumen 2 (Crónica y ponencias), Zaragoza, 1996, pp. 459-474. (King John II was always attentive to the problems of the government of Castile and the position of his son, and as we can see from his coded letters between July and August 1478, a few months before his death he still gave his son tips on how to defend his place in this kingdom, and even how to manage the newborn Prince John's education)

³⁵ The testament of King Ferdinand made in Torredesillas, 12-VII-1475 was Published by the **DUQUE DE BERWICK Y ALBA** (1915). Noticias históricas y genealógicas sobre los estados de Montijo y Teba, Madrid, pp. 232-235; and **SESMA MUÑOS, J.A.** (1992). Fernando de Aragón, Hispaniarum Rex, Zaragoza, Apéndice de documentos notables, nº 13, pp. 260-263. Cited by **FRANCISCO OLMOS, José María de** (2002) La sucesión de los Reyes Católicos (1475-1504). Texts and documents. In: Cuadernos de Investigación Histórica. Seminario "Cisernos", 2002, 19, 19, pp. 129-166

Scachs d'amor can be verified by this matter in 1476, because in the poem we see a winner³⁶.

The queen loved her husband passionately. She was superior to him in talent and gifts of government, but she acted in such a way that "the merits were attributed to him." She was almost fanatical about the religious aspect. Apart from that she was impulsive, energetic, proud, and above all visionary. She was jealous to excess, but covered her husband's infidelities. Isabella's character was very strong. Once she was annoyed with the work developed by the chronicler of the Court, Hernando del Pulgar. When writing a feat of Ferdinand the chronicler made no mention of her as a partner in this feat and Isabella reprimanded Pulgar. The chronicler of the Court could not do anything else than rectify the incident, because above all Isabella was a very powerful queen.

Isabella, the humanist queen, exempted printers and booksellers from paying tax since 1477, confirming this exemption in the Courts of Toledo in 1480. This is the reason why the press flourished more in Spain than anywhere else in Europe. With the help of the humanist queen the amount of books was enormous. It motivated printers so that many works were printed to the cult of Queen of Castile. According to the queen's chronicler, the Italian Lucio Marineo Siculo, this was the reason that the Castilian geniuses were successful in literature. Due to this event the culture in Castile had an advantage for several decades in northern Europe, a culture that countries like

³⁶ Chess historian Von der Lasa gave the date 1475, Garzon also gave 1475. I thought that the poem was started in 1475 and completed in 1476. Today historians have generally accepted the date of 1475 to which I agree completely.

England, France, or the German States could not reach. This was the case, perhaps, only by some Italian states³⁷.

Isabella hated the cards and all chance games³⁸, and like the scholar Lucio Marineo who lived in her Court for some years she regarded professional players to have the same condition as blasphemous ones. The Courts ordinances of Madrigal, held in 1476, are a clear example that Isabella did not want to have any of the games and that she wanted to remove them wherever possible. The legal framework to pursue or chase the game was ready and now she could fight the vice that caused the ruin of many families and estates, fights, riots, injuries, deaths, and above all offenses against God. Because of the dice game people spitting and expressing filthy words, blasphemed and renounced God.

The provisions arising from the decision of the Courts of Toledo, so hard to be implemented throughout the kingdom, greatly punished the game players due to the hardness of the

³⁷ This is something to bear in mind with respect to the first books of chess and draughts. This culture was initiated by Queen Isabella, thus giving rise to the magnificence of the fifteenth century - the Spanish XVI century stunned the world.

³⁸ It is quite interesting to know what games were played in the XV century. Under the provisions of the Court of Toledo it was only allowed to play cards and tables since the ban was total for the game of dice. The crier of Murcia, just as in other cities, was saying "... you cannot play dice and *jaldeta* or backgammon, or cards, or *a la rifa*, or the *flux*, or some other games, nor play them in your homes or give players boards or cards for playing".

Municipal Archives of Murcia A.C. 1475-76, session of 8-XII-1475.

Cited by **VEAS ARTESEROS, Francisco de Asís** (1998) In: Actualización científica y didáctica en historia medieval. Capítulo El Juego en la edad media, notas para su estudio, p. 218

In Murcia in the fifteenth century people played "*gresca* or *grisca*, *rifa*, *jaldeta*, *bufa*, *avellanetas*, *alcarriches*, both *dardo* and *alfardón*, and other games known as *flux*, Cf. **VEAS ARTESEROS, Francisco de Asís** (1990) In: Documents of the fourteenth century, 3, C.O.D.O.M., XII. Murcia, p. 351

same and the zeal of the councils to meet the Royal Ordinances³⁹. Therefore it was an ideal situation to create other types of not prohibited games, such as chess and other types of Andarraya and to promote new rules in the same games or invent other ones.

It must have been a tough test for Isabella when she became aware of the fact that Fernando was fond of cards. The chronicler Hernando de Pulgar tells us that the king lost much time with the game of chess, sometimes more than his work really could permit. In his youth he also played the ball game, but in later years Ferdinand was fond of chess and *chaquete*⁴⁰. His wife, however, preferred poetry, music, horse riding, hunting, and holding serious discussions on literature, philosophy, and theology⁴¹.

As became clear in this chapter, King Fernando had a considerable interaction with the three poets and presumably they wanted to flatter him in one way or another and had presented him with the poem. The strange thing is that the poem by these three poets would not be published when they were in the habit of publishing all their poems.

This event is rather surprising, because the two monarchs were able to take full advantage of poetic propaganda in those years. In those years the poetic eulogy of symbols and images formed a royal image without contradiction, being a stereotype of the king easily assimilated by the

³⁹ **VEAS ARTESEROS, Francisco de Asís** (1998) Actualización científica y didáctica en historia medieval. Capítulo El Juego en la edad media, notas para su estudio, pp. 210-211

⁴⁰ It was a game of backgammon. Each player had 15 pieces. It is a game that has been taken erroneously more than once for a game of draughts.

⁴¹ **WALSH, W.T.** (1963) Isabel la cruzada. Colección Austral, Espasa Calpe, S.A., p. 36

receiver and making it one of the privileged discourses of monarchy. The size of these panegyrics propaganda is based on the intrinsic to the entire oral poetic composition intended to be recited or sung. Poetry allows optimal conditions for the dissemination of political ideas, as it is not only intended for a small audience, but it also manages to reach a wide audience in the context of religious and courtesans' celebrations, and especially the citizens' celebrations, because they summon all the people around the monarch. Hence the Royal ceremonies are the ideal projection of royal propaganda which is contained in the written poetic compositions to exalt the monarchy, the figure and actions of the monarchs⁴².

Poems dedicated to the kings, which would be recited during the royal entrance, help to complete the character of propaganda that this type of ceremony has. The poet becomes the authoritative voice of the speech recognition that the king asks his people. But the poem also proves to be the ideal way to transmit other political objects, such as the derivatives of the domination pretensions of the king. All this is reflected in the composition directed to Fernando on his entry in Barcelona in 1473.

⁴² **CARRASCO MANCHADO, ANA ISABEL** (1995) Propaganda política en los panegíricos poéticos de los Reyes Católicos: una aproximación. En: *Anuario de Estudios Medievales*, Volume II, pp. 517-543. The main formulas and expressions from which the defense of the monarchy had been realized in the songbooks have been studied by: **NIETO SORIA, José Manuel** (1988) *Apología y propaganda de la realeza en los cancioneros castellanos del siglo XV*. pp. 200-221. You can see his work: **NIETO SORIA, José Manuel** (1988) *Fundamentos ideológicos del poder real en Castilla (siglos XIII-SVI)*, Madrid. On the other hand the relationship between propaganda and royal ceremonies is studied in the work of: **NIETO SORIA, José Manuel** (1993) *Ceremonias de la realeza. Propaganda y legitimación en la Castilla Trastámara*, Madrid.

It is a composition of one of his most faithful followers, Gómez Manrique, and expresses the general mood with Fernando's pace in a so difficult situation. Fernando arrived at Barcelona just out of the revolt and this is why in the poem of welcoming people tried to please the future King of Aragon with expressions of love and fidelity. Then the monarchy order of apology is reflected, which is nothing else than the religious model of monarchy, in which the king keeps peace in the kingdom by keeping the laws and dispensing justice, in contrast to the divided Kingdom: "Loving Justice, King justified King, / shall be prospered your crown / ...with weapons in war,/ A God in heaven, a king on earth / to be feared by all nations."

Although organized by city authorities, the Royal entrances cannot escape the king's control, who is the true protagonist. For this reason expressions do not fail that besides exalting and affirming the monarchical power drive a given expansion program.



The Catholic monarchs

This poem employs the use of prophecy that serves to encourage Fernando's expansionist ambitions on the Peninsula. Another way to achieve the same goal is to greet Fernando with appellatives which will encourage him to reach the highest power. "That King from whom the world expect Monarch", which is the same as saying "universal emperor". These expressions are not random if we consider the historical context in which they are pronounced: the imposition of royal authority on a rebellious city, i.e. the state of an imminent struggle against the French rival and the dispute over the Castilian throne⁴³. In the poem de Gracia Dei, that apparently dates before the year 1468, the figure of Isabella is symbolically elevated to a position of magnificence and triumph. The whole Court of Isabella accompanies the infant with a colorful parade, being an imitation of royal entrance into a city or simply a festive entrance to the palace. Allegorical characters embody the virtues around Isabella and, personified, recite verses exalting her preeminence and victory⁴⁴.

The war of succession to the throne is the context in which they wrote and released the Sermon of ballads *about the high and mighty prince, king and lord, King Ferdinand, King of Castile and Aragon, on the yoke ...*, written by the preacher of the kings Íñigo de Mendoza. According to Julio Rodríguez-Puértolas⁴⁵ these ballads are dated 1475-1476.

⁴³ **CARRASCO MANCHADO, Ana Isabel** (1995) Propaganda política en los panegíricos poéticos de los Reyes Católicos: una aproximación. In: Anuario de Estudios Medievales, Volume II, pp. 521-523

⁴⁴ For the work *Crianza y virtuosa doctrina* of Pedro de Gracia Dei. Vid, **INFANTES, Víctor** (1989) Edición, literatura y realeza, apuntes sobre los pliegos poéticos incunables. In: "Literatura Hispánica, Reyes Católicos y Descubrimiento", Barcelona, pp. 95-97

⁴⁵ **MENDOZA, Fray Íñigo de** (1968) Cancionero, Madrid, p. LXVI. Cited by **CARRASCO MANCHADO, Ana Isabel** (1995). Propa-

This is a poem made in the sense that Ferdinand wanted to put on an image of authority, because the idea was to win the war and subjugate the nobles who had declared to be his enemies. On the other hand the king also needed to convey a most benevolent image of him to allay fears that could encourage, and inspire greater confidence in the Castilian kingdom, highlighting their good qualities above those of the Portuguese opponent.



King Ferdinand

Throughout the sermon the legitimacy of the succession of Ferdinand is emphasized: "Our natural Lord / Who by law and reason / is dressing State cloths / of Castile and Leon /. Another very effective way to do it (remember this liturgical context of diffusion) is alluding to the divine origin of power granted to the king, God puts in Fernando's hands currency or insignia of power (thongs and yoke) with which to subjugate the nobility.

ganda política en los panegíricos poéticos de los Reyes Católicos: una aproximación. En: Anuario de Estudios Medievales, Volume II, p. 526

It also affirms the legitimacy of succession of the kings by alluding to recent events, as is the marriage of Ferdinand and Isabella. It tries to discredit the arguments used by the propaganda of the other side. Irrefutable proof of legitimacy will be God's judgment favorable to the kings, which will give final victory to Fernando. Furthermore war propaganda feeds on anti-French and anti-Portuguese references and a critique to the cooperation with those nobles who are at odds with the kings⁴⁶.

Most likely the king himself had to do with this matter. King Ferdinand knew that his wife did not quite agree with the hours he lost playing chess. The queen did not like games in those years⁴⁷. On the other hand there is the possibility that the king felt himself somewhat humbled by this poem where the queen had more power than the king. As we have seen previously political poems were written for Ferdinand and the poem *Scachs d'amor* would focus all attention on his wife. However, it is reasonable to think that Ferdinand discussed the issue with his wife.

Whatever the real reasons would be for not publishing the poem we will never know. All Isabella's ideas to unify Spain and the formation of only one religion were realized

⁴⁶ **CARRASCO MANCHADO, ANA ISABEL** (1995) Propaganda política en los panegíricos poéticos de los Reyes Católicos: una aproximación. En: Anuario de Estudios Medievales, Volume II, pp. 527-528

⁴⁷ 1480-VI-13, Toledo. Reyes al concejo de Sevilla. Ratificando los ordenamientos promulgados hasta la fecha referentes a la prohibición de juegos de dados y cartas. (The Monarchs to the council of Seville, ratifying the enacted orders to that date with reference to the prohibition of dice and cards games). (Archivo General de Simancas, R.G.S. 1480-VI-13, fol. 263). Cited by **VEAS ARTESEROS, Francisco de Asís** (1998) Actualización científica y didáctica en historia medieval. Capítulo El Juego en la edad media, notas para su estudio, pp. 220-221

in 1492 and from this date she⁴⁸ supposedly gave the green light to the final implementation of the new powerful dama in the game of chess⁴⁹ and andarraya. Antonio Nebrija was responsible for spreading the words “Dama” and “Andarraya” around the world through his dictionaries around the world. The time had come to show the world what the Spanish nation was made of.

By chance I found out that approval of the voyage of Columbus in 1492 had to do with a game of chess. The matter seems doubtful to me, but it is worthwhile to mention, because I have always related the details of the discovery (1492) with the accolade of modern chess (a new world and life was found on the board). The author of the article appoints up to two times Nebrija, who in my opinion was well aware (much more than it seems) of all matters relating to the new powerful dama. Garzón was saying the same: *"I think it a very valid article for our research. From it we can also deduce that the Queen was not exactly a bad player (including modern chess), but the issue of the chess party is more questionable and looks like a composition."*

In this respect the writer Ned Munger refers to Edward Lasker who had supposedly investigated an archive of Cordoba where he found two letters. These letters were supposedly written in 1492 by Hernando del Pulgar who

⁴⁸ We know that the queen was vain and liked the honors and fame.

⁴⁹ We do not know if they played chess with the powerful dama, but the fact is that even with chess people played for money. Francisco Moro, neighbour of Logroño and squire of the guards of captain Puertocarrero, was able to win 20,000 maravedies from Juan Gonzalez playing chess. Cited by **VEAS ARTESEROS, Francisco de Asís** (1998) Actualización científica y didáctica en historia medieval. Capítulo El Juego en la edad media, notas para su estudio, p. 207

describes a chess incident between King Ferdinand and his Minister Fonseca⁵⁰.

History often hangs on strange and unrelated events. Indeed, had a game of chess in 1492 turned out differently, the Western Hemisphere might have been discovered by someone other than Columbus, and South America might have been conquered by a people other than the Spanish. It seems that because the explorer was infuriated by King Ferdinand's unwillingness to assign him the rank of admiral, he was about to leave Spain and forgo his expedition for the Spanish court. As it happened, that news reached the palace while Ferdinand was playing chess with a favorite opponent Señor Fonseca. Much as Queen Isabella wanted to intercede on Columbus's behalf, she knew better than to interrupt the play. Hernando del Pulgar who was watching the game agreed with her and believed that Ferdinand's reaction to the news about Columbus would be influenced by his mood at the end of the game, which he was losing. Pulgar whispered a move to Isabella. She distracted Ferdinand just as he raised his hand to make a fatal move. He rethought his strategy, made a different move, and won the game. Isabella then easily persuaded him to send a horseman to find and recall Columbus.

Three-and-a-half centuries later ... writer Edward Lasker delved into the archives of Cordova. (The writer coincidentally shared the last name of his companion Emanuel Lasker, the German chess master and world champion from 1894 to 1921.) There he found two letters written in 1492 by Hernando del Pulgar in which the history-making chess incident is described.

Moreover Julio Ganzo⁵¹ discusses in his book the same issue of letters linked to chess. Hopefully one day chess researchers will study this matter in depth. Apparently the author M.J. Vavallée published in 1845 the same letters in

⁵⁰ **MUNGER, Ned** (1998) *Culture, chess, & art. A collector's odyssey across seven continents: the Americas*, p. 167.

⁵¹ **GANZO, JULIO** (1966) *Historia General del Ajedrez*, Madrid

the French magazine *La Palamedes*⁵². Thus we see here a connection between Edward Lasker and Vavallée. The article by Vavallée was translated into Spanish by Dr. Jose Tolosa and Carreras⁵³ in 1898.

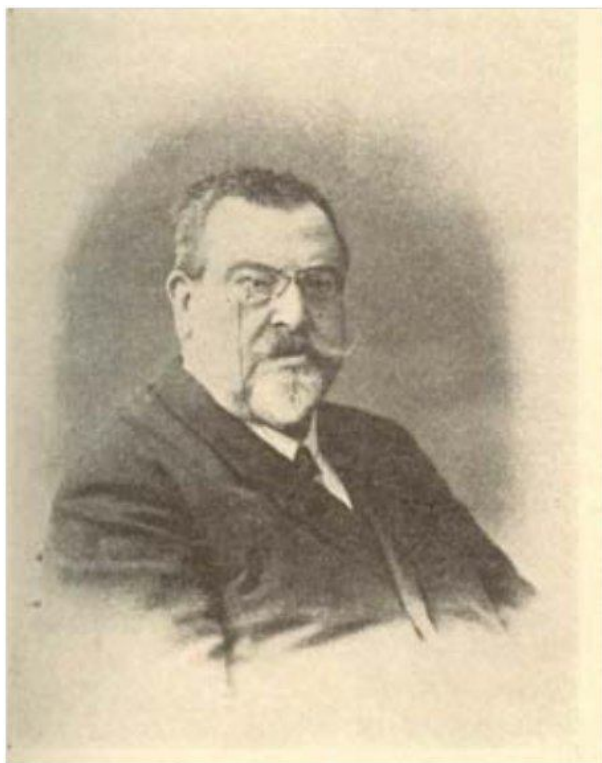
Since I do not know the Valenciano language I asked José Antonio Garzón Roger from Valencia to study again the work done by Dr. Ricardo Calvo since I was sure that there must be metaphors in the poem *Scachs d'amor* in relation with Queen Isabella of Castile. Garzon was happily willing to study this poem in depth and his results were outstanding⁵⁴.

⁵² Garzon told me that the article in question was published in French in the chess magazine *La Palamède*, 1845 (pp. 459-464). It was translated by famous Dr. Jose Tolosa y Carreras (who was fluent in French) in the *Ruy Lopez* chess magazine, Volume III, March 1898 (pp. 66-69). The translation that incorporates Ganzo in his book is identical to that by Tolosa y Carreras, but inexplicably not cited by him. One of these letters was copied from the archive by M.J. Vavallée (others say M. J. Lavalée) and published in the French chess magazine *La Palamède*.

⁵³ **TOLOSA Y CARRERAS, JOSÉ** (1898) Chess Magazine *Ruy López*, Volume III, March 1898, pp. 66-69.

With thanks to Mr. Garzon who gave me the text. Garzon believes that due to the text coming from Tolosa y Carreras we can trust him with full guarantee on his fidelity to the article of 1845. Regarding the first article, the author seems well documented and it would appear that he has consulted the letters in the archive! How complicated and hard is research! Someone will have to see one day the letters in *La Colombina* of Seville to confirm the accuracy and authenticity of this story ... and maybe the person in question will find something new and surprising.

⁵⁴ **GARZÓN ROGER, José Antonio** (2004) *Scachs d'amor*. The definitive Proof of the Valencian Origins of Modern Chess. In **WESTERVELD, Govert** (2004) *La reina Isabel la Católica, su reflejo en la dama poderosa de Valencia, cuna de ajedrez moderno y origen del juego de damas*. In collaboration with José Antonio Garzón Roger, Valencia. Generalidad Valenciana, Secretaria Autonómica de Cultura.



Dr. José Tolosa y Carreras (1846-1916)
(Courtesy of Josep Alio)

CHAPTER II.

ISABELLA I OF CASTILE AS THE VIRGIN MARY ON THE CHESSBOARD

Already in the seventies the future Queen Isabella I of Castile was an important figure in Spanish life. The church was involved around 1469 in persuading the princes that she had a divine mission to govern Castile. She became for the church as the Virgin Mary. Those years the church, through Pope Pius II, venerated in all places the Virgin Mary. The first book in the Valencian language in 1474 was a set of texts in praise of Virgin Mary. Since in chess, according to Cessolis, the order of the board pieces is the order of the world, shortly thereafter one sees a poem by three poets appear speaking about a new powerful queen on the chessboard. I want to prove in this article with additional proofs that the new powerful queen is Isabella I of Castile.

Valencia was the Spanish city where the art of printing was first exercised in 1474. The earliest work printed there was *Obres, o Trobes les quales tracten de las hors de la Sacratissima Verge Maria*. This work was the result of a contest promoted by the viceroy of the Kingdom of Valencia, Luis Despuig. Bernard Fenollar, a priest of the Cathedral, acted as secretary of the jury and the organizer. At least thirty-eight poets participated in this contest, among them Bernard Fenollar, Narcis Vinyoles, and Francesc Castellví.

Now knowing about the life of protonotary Juan Ramírez de Lucena⁵⁵ it is clear that he was involved with the introduction of the new powerful dama in the chess game. The Dutch historian Dr. Arie van der Stoep made his doctoral dissertation on the word *dame* and so we know that this word is of French origin. The son of Juan Ramírez de Lucena with the sole name of Lucena published a chess book in 1997 in Salamanca. Juan Ramírez de Lucena was in the service of Prince Ferdinand II in 1968-1970 and from 1970 in the service of Queen Isabella I of Castile (Isabel la Católica) and King Ferdinand II of Aragon until his death around 1504. Between the years 1470 and 1474 he was in France to defend the interest of the future monarchs.

Professor Petzold (1933-1999) has since 1981 represented the opinion that the term *dama* (lady) could be derived in chess from *Notre Dame*, the Mother of God⁵⁶. He justified this assumption in more detail in his book *Kulturgeschichte*

⁵⁵ WESTERVELD, Govert (in press) The Ambassador Juan Ramírez de Lucena, the father of the chessbook writer Lucena.

⁵⁶ Joachim Petzold: König und Dame. Figuren im Schach, in: Urania, 1981, Nr. 6. p. 3 ff.

*des Schachspiels*⁵⁷. In a letter to me on 11 August 1994 he asked:

If Valencia were the birthplace of both the new chess and the draughts game, then I would take a look at the print shop owner Dr. Miguel Albert who competed in 1474 for the price of a hymn to the Virgin Mary⁵⁸, and perhaps even brought out the lost book of Vincent. Can something still be determined about him in the city archives?

In an article presented at the Vienna workshop from 3 to 5 November 1994 Professor Petzold showed an interesting study about Virgin Mary⁵⁹. He explained that the English "Moralitas de scaccario" about the chess sermon of Jacobus de Cessolis until the editing by Konrad von Amme Hausen had the principle that "The order of the board pieces is the order of the world⁶⁰." In the 15th century the artistically-

⁵⁷ Joachim Petzold: Schach. Das Königliche Spiel. Eine Kulturgeschichte, Leipzig 1986, p. 151. Compare the recent keyword Dame in "Meyers Schachlexikon, herausgegeben und bearbeitet von Otto Borik ... in Zusammenarbeit mit ... Joachim Petzold u. a., Mannheim 1993, p. 59"

⁵⁸ **WESTERVELD, Govert** (2004) La reina Isabel la Católica: su reflejo en la dama poderosa de Valencia, cuna del ajedrez moderno y origen del juego de damas. In colaboración con José Antonio Garzón Roger. Generalidad Valenciana. Conselleria de Cultura, Educació i Esport, Valencia, p. 401.

José Antonio Garzón Roger observes: "But we also perceive that this Queen's Chess is very new and it is being invented at the very moment. Was the new Chess created in Bernat Fenollar's literary circle soon after the 1474 literary competition in honour of the Virgin Mary? We must take into account the sequence of historical events surrounding the new monarchs in 1475-1476. The poets seemed to know about these events, as they show in their work. Was their proposal also a gift to this new monarchy whose very strong Queen had, in turn, inspired them?"

⁵⁹ **PETZOLD, Joachim** (1994) Wie erklärt sich der Name Dame im Schach? Beitrag zum Wiener Workshop vom 3. bis 5. November 1994 zum Thema von Wesir zur Dame.

⁶⁰ **BORST, Otto** (1983) Alltagsleben im Mittelalter, Frankfurt am Main, p. 59.

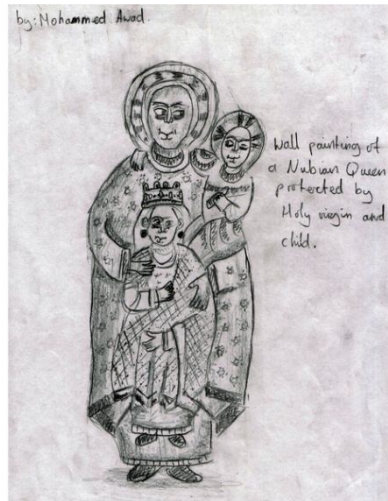
mindful Pope Pius II (Enea Silvio Piccolomini) praised Germany for its many churches dedicated to Virgin Mary.



Prof. Joachim Petzold

As we know, Juan Ramírez de Lucena worked with the Pope Pius II for several years and perfectly knew the influence of Virgin Mary in many countries. Furthermore Petzold stated that probably around 1300 in England a collection of stories was compiled from the ancient Roman period under the name of "*Gesta Romanorum*". It narrates the legends about the origins of the game of chess. The chapter "the chess game" reads that the powerful King on the 64 fields of the chessboard could be considered as "our Lord Jesus Christ who is the King of all in heaven and on Earth". He could move to any place. "Finally he also takes with him the Queen, i.e. the religious mother of mercy, Virgin Maria⁶¹."

⁶¹ **TRILLITZCH, Winfried** (1973) *Gesta Romanorum. Geschichten von den Römern. Ein Erzählbuch des Mittelalters.* Erstmals in vollständiger Übersetzung herausgegeben von Winfried Trillitzsch, Leipzig. The Chapter about Chess is in p. 166.



The Nubian Queen

In the following picture we see a wall painting from the late 12th century AD. It is of a dead Nubian Queen being cradled by Virgin Mary who is also cradling Baby Jesus. It is very similar to the wall painting 'Christ Victor Trampling Evil Powers' made during the late 8th, early 9th century AD⁶². It probably still has nothing to do with the game of chess, but there was already an early connection between Virgin Mary and a Queen.

By the end of the 12th century the queen replaced the vizier throughout Europe (except in Spain). In the 12th and 13th centuries people developed an extraordinary veneration for Virgin Mary. She was the queen in heaven.

⁶² Drawing by Mohammed Awad.

http://www.britishmuseum.org/explore/young_explorers/childrens_online_tours/sudan_ancient_treasures/wall_painting_of_a_nubian_quee.aspx

By Saeed Abdel-Gadir, Mohammed Awad, Mohamed El-Mahadi, Yassin Abdelazim

Gautier de Coincy's *Les Miracles de Nostre Dame* is an extraordinary 13th-century collection of songs, prayers, versed sermons, and stories that recount miracles associated with Virgin Mary translated from Latin sources, reset into French verse, and joined with various combinations of original music and trouvère love songs. Gautier de Coinci compares Virgin Mary to the Chess Queen. Unfortunately some authors see this Chess Queen with a powerful move. Yalom⁶³ refers to Steven M. Taylor⁶⁴. However, we have to take into account the chess expert and historian Murray who only speaks about a weak chess queen⁶⁵.

Gautier de Coinci (c. 1230) includes a long elaborate allegory of the spiritual life, imagined as a game of chess between God and the Devil, in his *Miracle de la Sainte Vierge* (ed. Paris, 1857, cols. 7-10, 128 lines in all). The Devil has driven man into an angle of the board and is one the points of mating him:

Tost nous aura en l'angle traiz; Nous serons pris et mat ce cuit.	
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His strongest move had been the expulsion of Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden. At this moment God comes to the rescue and makes a Fers which covers the check and finally mates the enemy:

Mez touz ces traiz fit il en vain, Quar Diex une tel fyerce fist Qui le mata et desconfit. Quant li doux Diex vit vers la fin Que n'avait trüe nes d'aufin	But he (Devil) made all these moves in vain, For God created a queen ⁶⁶ who checkmated and defeated him.
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⁶³ **YALOM, Marilyn** (2009) *Birth of the Chess Queen*. London, HarperCollins ebooks, p. 100 and 217.

⁶⁴ **TAYLOR, Steven M.** (1990) *God's Queen: Chess Imagery in the Poetry of Gautier de Coinci*. In: *Fifteenth Century Studies*, 17, pp. 403-419.

⁶⁵ **MURRAY, H.J.R.** (1913) *The History of Chess*, p. 749.

⁶⁶ **HUNT, Tony** (2007) *Miraculous Rhymes: The Writin of Gautier de Coinci*, Cambridge, pp. 53-59.

<p>Et qu'anemis par son desroi Chevalier, Roc, fierce ne Roi, Nes ne poon ni voulait laisser Au jeu se daigna abaissier Et fist un trait subtil et gent Par quoi rescout toute sa gent. C'est fierce traist par tel seus, Que l'anemie mate par tel sens.</p>	<p>When gentle God saw towards the end That he had no safeguard, not even a bishop, And that the Enemy in his excess would Leave no knight, rook, queen, king, Not even a pawn, he humbled himself To play the game and made a subtle, noble move by which he rescued his people.</p>
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The Fers that so happily turns the tables upon the Devil is Virgin Mary, and Gautier devotes many lines to the praise of this piece:

<p>Ceste fierce n'est pas d'ivoire, Ainz es la fierce au roy de gloire Qui rescout toute sa maisnée Qu'avoit déables defrainée. Ceste fierce le mate en roie, Ceste fierce le mate en l'angle, Ceste fierce li tolt la jangle, Ceste fierce li tolt sa proie, Ceste fierce touzjors l'asproie, Ceste fierce touzjourz le point, Ceste fierce de point en point Par fine force le dechace</p>	<p>This queen is no ivory one, she belongs to the King of Glory who saved his people whom the Devil had claimed. This Queen checkmates him in a row, This Queen checkmates him in a corner, This Queen removes his ruse, This Queen removes his prey, This Queen constantly harries him This Queen constantly presses him, This Queen se déplace à travers les lignes horizontales</p>
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The poet is so delighted with his allegory that he returns to it again and again. The last extract from Gautier de Coinci shows conclusively that the Fers had only their weak Muslim move.

Etymologically⁶⁷ the process operated in the specific case of the *dame* was that the Firzan passed to alferza, a name given by King Alfonso the Wise in his famous chess manuscript. This name became *fercia* in Latin, being the key step for sexual metamorphosis, because the alferza of King Alfonso remained to be of a male character. The French used *fierce* and later *vierge* (virgin), associating it with Virgin Mary, through which the piece changed into a female piece. The works in Latin baptized the piece in *regina*, partly because Virgin Mary is the Queen of Heaven, or *Regina Coelis*, and partly because in most medieval monarchies the Queen occupied an important place in human life.

In the foreword of the first of the four books of the *Amadis* published in Venice in 1533, Lucena⁶⁸ through Francisco Delicado appears to know the *Gesta Romanorum*:

Cuan marauillosamente este Autor uos pinto este cauallero Amadis de Gaula? Y hizolo por fazer la razon. Que los Pintores & Poetas y estoriadores como el. Tienen licencia de Pintar/y dezir lo que a ellos mejor les pareciere. Para fazer sus obras en todo & a todos hermosas. Diolo a este cauallero Amadis de Gaula tres fortunas muy apropiadas. La primera echado en el arca cerrada por las aguas del mar y en esto se asemejo a aquel gran Profeta. Moyses y como cuenta el libro que ha nombre. (gesta Romanorun) de san Gregorio que fue / por el semejante lançado en el mar/ de su madre y hermana.

Translation:

How beautifully this author paints you this knight Amadis of Gaul? And he did it to be right. The Painters and Poets and historians like him have authorization to paint and to tell what

⁶⁷ The expert in Etymology of the word *dama* is Dr. Arie van der Stoep:
<http://history.chess.free.fr/papers/van%20der%20Stoep%202002.pdf>
<http://www.draughtshistory.nl/origin13.htm>

⁶⁸ **WESTERVELD, Govert** (in press) The wanderings of the chess book writer Lucena

seems better to them. To make his works complete and beautiful he gave this knight Amadis of Gaul three very appropriate fortunes. The first thrown into the closed ark by the seawaters and in this it is similar to the great Prophet Moyses, and as the book tells with the name (*Gesta Romanorum*) of St. Gregory that was by such thrown into the sea by his mother and sister.

As indicated before, Lucena knew the work of *Gesta Romanorum*⁶⁹ and there is no doubt that his father Juan Ramírez de Lucena also knew this work, because he had a good library⁷⁰.

At that time I could not devote attention to the different ways of investigation that Dr. Petzold had suggested to me because of a lack of time, knowledge, and my other professional obligations. Now 21 years later the situation has changed. I have written many more books about the history of modern chess and the draughts game and even a book about the chess author Lucena⁷¹ and another one about his father, the protonotary Juan Ramírez de Lucena. On the other hand I now have more time and the professional obligations are becoming fewer due to my retirement. So the time has come to pay more attention to the studies of the much too young departed Professor Petzold. In this respect I will discuss three points of his interesting study of 1994 presented in November to the Vienna Workshop. The first

⁶⁹ **WESTERVELD, Govert** (in press) *The Wanderings of the Chess Book Writer Lucena*

⁷⁰ **MIGUEL BRIONGOS, Jerónimo** (2014) *Juan de Lucena. Diálogo sobre la vida feliz. Epístola exhortatoria a las letras*. Real Academia Española, p. XCV

⁷¹ **VALLE DE RICOTE, Gofredo** (2008). *Los tres autores de La Celestina: El judeoconverso Juan Ramírez de Lucena, sus hijos Fernando de Rojas (Lucena) y Juan del Encina (alias Bartolomé Torres Naharro y Francisco Delicado)*. Tomo II: bajo el seudónimo de Godofredo Valle de Ricote. *El libro perdido de Lucena. "Tractado sobre la muerte de Don Diego de Azevedo"*. Blanca.

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point refers to Pope Pius II and we know that the protonotary Juan Ramírez de Lucena was his dependant and maybe his dinner companion:

The great Italian poet Dante is not afraid to compare in his "divine comedy" his earthly beloved with the heavenly Virgin Mary below and to worship both accordingly. Something similar is to be said of the last minstrel Heinrich von Meissen, who for that reason was given the honorary name "Frauenlob". Contemplating the late medieval images of Mary more closely it seems that they are thoroughly permeated by this spirit. Even the grieving Mother of God in Michelangelo's famous Pieta sculpture is according to age a virgin. They took no offense because the Queen of Heaven was also portrayed as the queen of the earthly in a very personal sense. The art wise Pius II (Enea Silvio Piccolomini) praised in the XV century Germany for his many churches consecrated to Virgin Mary⁷².

In 1994 Professor Petzold was not aware of the life of Juan Ramírez de Lucena, the father of Lucena, since his first biography⁷³ (In Spanish) was written in 2006. The presence of Juan Ramírez de Lucena in Rome is reflected in his *Epístola Exhortatoria*⁷⁴ and documents place him as a

⁷² **PETZOLD, Dr. Joachim** (1994) Wie erklärt sich der Name Dame im Schach. Beitrag zum Wiener Workshop between 3 and 5th November, 1994, concerning Thema "Vom Wesir zur Dame", pp. 1-10 Cited, p. 5

Petzold mentions two important identifications of Virgin Mary with the Chess Queen:

- **TRILLITZSCH, W.** (1973) Gesta Romanorum, kap. 166, p. 179f.

- **SCHRÖDER, E.** (1882) *Das Goldene Spiel Von Meister* Ingold, P. 41

⁷³ **VALLE DE RICOTE, Gofredo** (2006) Los tres autores de la Celestina: el judeoconverso Juan Ramírez de Lucena, sus hijos Fernando de Rojas (Lucena) y Juan del Encina (alias Bartolomé Torres Naharro y Francisco Delicado). Tomo I: Biografía, estudio y documentos del antiguo autor de la Celestina, el ajedrecista Juan Ramírez de Lucena. (Prólogo Prof. Dr. Ángel Alcalá). Blanca. ISBN 84-923151-4-8

⁷⁴ **LUCENA, JUAN DE** (1892) *Epístola Exhortatoria a las letras* (en A. Paz y Meliá (editor): Opúsculos literarios de los siglos XIX a XVI

member of the entourage of the powerful Cardinal Prospero Colonna, cousin of Pope Martin (1417-1431). Some bulls of Pope Pius II (Enea Silvio Piccolomini) might tell us the movement of Juan Ramírez de Lucena. In the Bull N°. 1173 Juan de Lucena is called "beloved filio" when in 1458 Pope Pius II gives Juan de Lucena one canonicato that has become vacant in Sevilla after the death of Gonzalo Sánchez de Córdoba⁷⁵.

Di Camillo says that Juan de Lucena was «familiari continuo commensali» of Cardinal Prospero Colonna (1426-1463) in 1458. On the other hand Lucena was bachelor in 1458 and was licensed in 1461, so Lucena studied for three years in Rome⁷⁶. Medina also says that from a document we learn that Lucena was still "bachelor" and had also been «familiari continuo commensali» of Cardinal Prospero Colonna, head of the Church of St. George in Velabro⁷⁷. In the Bull 1201 dated November 3

(Madrid: Sociedad de Bibliófilos Españoles, 1892), p. 215. Cited by **MEDINA BERMUDEZ, ALEJANDRO** (1998) *El diálogo De Vita Beata, de Juan de Lucena: un rompecabezas histórico* (II). Dicenda. Cuadernos de Filología Hispánica, No. 16, pp. 135-170, also p. 158. **RICO, Francisco** (1978, *Nebrija frente a los bárbaros*, p. 38) refers to p. 215 of the book of Paz y Meliá saying: «yo fui a Roma grandevo y mi gramática castellana troqué con los niños por la suya italiana», furthermore explaining «that the career and personality of Lucena will be cleared up definitively in the dissertation of Jerónimo Miguel Briongos».

⁷⁵ **BELTRÁN DE HEREDIA, VICENTE** (1967) *Bulario de la Universidad de Salamanca* (1219 – 1549), 3 vols. Bula 1173, p. 93. Cited by **MEDINA BERMUDEZ, ALEJANDRO** (1998) *El diálogo De Vita Beata, de Juan de Lucena: un rompecabezas histórico* (II). Dicenda. Cuadernos de Filología Hispánica, no. 16, pp. 135-170, pp. 153 y 160

⁷⁶ **DI CAMILLO, Ottavio** (1976) *El humanismo castellano del siglo XV*, New York, p. 247

⁷⁷ **MEDINA BERMUDEZ, ALEJANDRO** (1998) *El diálogo De Vita Beata, de Juan de Lucena: un rompecabezas histórico* (II). Dicenda.

1461 Lucena is called «Dilecto filio Joanni de Lucena..., vero familiari nostro continuo commensali...» and the Pope extended the privilege of *familiarity* for one more year, forcing Lucena to remain beside him in Rome for another year⁷⁸.

In other words the protonotary Juan Ramírez de Lucena as dependant and dinner companion of the Pope Pius II was aware that many churches in Germany were consecrated to Virgin Mary.

But which events bring our Juan Ramírez de Lucena to Valencia? This is a document made in Valladolid on 2 January 1470 in which Ferdinand, Principe of Castile, Leon, and Aragon, King of Sicilia, appointed doctor Juan Ramírez de Lucena as counsellor of the Kingdom of Castile stating in the document: *e los muchos, buenos e leales seruiçios que me avedes fecho e fasedes de cada día* (and the many good and loyal services you gave and give me every day). According to Miguel Briongos this is an unequivocal recognition that the protonotary had for some time been in the service of Prince Ferdinand of Aragon. It should be taken into account that appointment of any person to an important position such as that of a member of the Council was not performed without a good knowledge of the person's qualities, merits obtained, and above all, trust⁷⁹.

Cuadernos de Filología Hispánica, no. 16, pp. 135-170, citation on p. 160

⁷⁸ **BELTRÁN DE HEREDIA, VICENTE** (1967) Bulario de la Universidad de Salamanca (1219 – 1549), 3 vols. Bula 1201, p. 117. Cited by **MEDINA BERMUDEZ, ALEJANDRO** (1998) El diálogo De Vita Beata, de Juan de Lucena: un rompecabezas histórico (II). Dicenda. Cuadernos de Filología Hispánica, no. 16, pp. 135-170, pp. 153 y 161

⁷⁹ **MIGUEL BRIONGOS, Jerónimo** (2014) Juan de Lucena. Diálogo sobre la vida feliz. Epístola exhortatoria a las letras. Real Academia Española, pp. 23-24

This means that Juan Ramírez de Lucena was before 1470 in the service of Prince Ferdinand and Miguel Briongos thinks that it might be in 1468 or 1469.

The second point concerns Dr. Miguel Albert of Valencia to whom Professor Petzold refers when discussing the praise songs of 1474 and the book of Francesch Vicent:

In Valencia, Spain lived Dr. Miguel Albert who not only participated in a hymns competition of 1474 to the Holy Virgin, but twenty years later as a print shop owner also edited with the German printers Peter Trinchler and Lope de la Roca (Wolf of Stone) the unfortunately lost chess book of Vicent Francesch. We do not know whether this standing book already contained, on the threshold of transition of chess from old to new, the term *Dama*. That would have had importance⁸⁰ in this context for the very speculative assumption that the Madonna praising Albert had been involved in the transmission of religious interpretations of the term *Dame* in the game of chess.

The observations of Dr. Petzold are quite interesting with regards to the prevailing religious life in the XV century. He did not participate in the hymns competition of 1474, but on May 13 1475 he was appointed Judge of appeals for review of notaries and since then we know him as one of the main contributors to the definitive establishment of printing in

⁸⁰ The manuscript of Perugia is just text, with the exception of Per. 63. In the manuscript of Cesena there are multiple languages: Italian, Spanish, Valencian or Latin; plus the many abbreviations in these languages. Most of the time the piece of *Dama* is abbreviated to "D." or "d.", and as the text is written in a mixture of Spanish and Italian it is not easy to deduce what the abbreviation really means, although it can be "*Dama*", because normally the uses of technical terms are chosen by the graphs in Castilian: lance, take, etc., a fact that led Pratesi to think that the author was a Spaniard. Occasionally we see the whole word "*Dama*", and sometimes "*Dona*" in the manuscripts. (Personal communication from the chess historical expert José Antonio Garzón Roger, Valencia)

Valencia. We know that the term *Dama* appears in the poem of *Scachs d'amor*, but we do not know whether Dr. Miguel Albert really had anything to do with that. However, the near connection of Dr. Miguel Albert with the Holy Virgin in 1474, his appointment as judge in 1475, the poem *Scachs d'amor* in 1475 by the three poets, and his connection with the writer Francesc Vicent in 1495 is very suspicious.

The poem *Scachs d'amor* was written by Bernard de Fenollar (a priest of the Cathedral), Narcís Vinyoles (lawyer and politician) and Francesc de Castelví. The *Scachs d'amor* or *Chess of Love*, is a poem based on a chess game between Francesc de Castellví and Narcís Vinyoles, while Bernat Fenollar comments and establishes the rules. It is the first documented game played with the modern rules of chess.

Dr. Petzold third and last point refers to the Spanish Queen Isabella I of Castile:

In Lucenas chess-Dama the spirit does not embody the final minnesongs, but it is a new era that began to change in order to match the relationship between the sexes. Involuntarily one is reminded of the Spanish Queen Isabella I of Castile who united Spain by her marriage to Ferdinand of Aragon and made clear to Spain that in a royal ruling family the man did not have in any case the upper hand.



Dr. Joachim Petzold

It is quite clear that Petzold with his article⁸¹ of late 1994 referred to the fact that Isabella I of Castile could have been the new powerful dama, but he still did not dare to give a firm hypothesis in this sense and gives various options in his study. He highlights the art-wise Pius II (Enea Silvio Piccolomini) who in the XV century praised Germany for its many churches consecrated to Virgin Mary. The protonotary Juan Ramirez de Lucena was dependant of the Pope Enea Silvio Piccolomini and Ambassador of the queen Isabella I of Castile. Dr. Petzold was on the right track without a doubt, but at that time little was known about Juan Ramírez de Lucena.

Researching Lucena was not easy. It took me several years and my friend Jerónimo Miguel Briongos from Barcelona took more than 36 years to write his doctoral thesis. I know him since 2004 when I was already for years involved in the study of the life of this protonotary, father of Lucena. He gave me several interesting hints for my book about Juan Ramírez de Lucena and he was one of the first people who obtained my book. All these years I encouraged him to finish his dissertation, because the world was waiting for it. It is quite interesting to see that he amply discussed my book about Juan de Lucena (Juan Ramírez de Lucena) in his doctoral thesis⁸². In 1975 Miguel Briongos wrote his first dissertation⁸³ about Juan de Lucena for obtaining his academic degree of the University of Barcelona.

⁸¹ **PETZOLD, Dr. Joachim** (1994) Wie erklärt sich der Name Dame im Schach. Beitrag zum Wiener Workshop between 3 and 5 November, 1994, concerning Thema “Vom Wesir zur Dame”, pp. 1-10

⁸² **MIGUEL BRIONGOS, Jerónimo** (2012). El De vita felici o diálogo sobre la vida feliz, de Juan de Lucena. Tesis doctoral. Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona.

⁸³ **MIGUEL BRIONGOS, Jerónimo** (1975) Juan de Lucena: breve estudio de conjunto en torno a su vida y producción literaria; bajo la dirección del Dr. Francisco Rico. Universitat autònoma de Barcelona.

But let us see what Juan Ramírez de Lucena was writing about Isabel I of Castile in his *Epístola Exhortatoria a las letras*. He compares the Queen with Diana, always as something very exceptional:

Callemos de todos; todos callemos ante la muy resplandeciente Diana, Reina nuestra Isabel, casada, madre, reina, y tan grande, asentando nuestros reales, ordenando nuestras batallas; nuestros cercos parando; oyendo nuestras querellas; nuestros juicios formando; inventando vestires; pompas hablando; escuchando músicos; toreas mirando; rodando sus reinos; andando, andando, y nunca parando; gramática oyendo, recrea. ¡O ingenio del cielo armado en la tierra! ¡O esfuerzo real, asentado en flaqueza! ¡O corazón de varon vestido de hembra, ejemplo de todas las reinas, de todas las mugeres dechado, y de todos los hombres materia de letras! ¿Quién tan torpe, tan rudo, que non las aprenda?

La muy clara ninfa Carmenta letras latinas nos dio; perdidas en nuestra Castilla, esta diua serena las anda buscando. Si al su resplandor miramos todos por ellas, non puede ser que non las hallemos. Si las manda su grandeza pregonar: Quien sabe de las letras latinas que perdió Castilla, véngalo á decir á su dueño, y habrá buen hallazgo; por cobdicia del premio, más presto se hallarán que se perdieron. Honor pare artes, y á todos enciende al estudio la gloria. ¿Non vedes cuántos comienzan á aprender admirando su Realeza? Lo que los reyes hacen, bueno ó malo, todos ensayamos de hacer. Si es bueno, por aplacer á nos mesmos; y si malo, por aplacer á ellos. Jugaba el Rey, éramos todos tahúres; studia la Reina, somos agora estudiantes. Y si vos me confesáis lo cierto, es cierto que su studio es causa del vuestro; ó sea por agradecerla, ó sea porque os agrada, ó por envidia de los que han comenzado á seguirla.

Translation

All shut up; all shut up at the very radiant Diana, our Queen Isabella, married, mother, queen, and so great, sprawling our actual ordering our battles; our fences stopping; hearing our complaints; our judgments forming; inventing vestires; talking bubbles; listening to musicians; looking at toreas; moving through her kingdoms; walking, walking, never stopping; listening grammar, recreating. What a genius of heaven, armed on earth! What a real effort seated in weakness! What a heart of

man with female clothes, example of all queens, paragon of all wives, and all men, matter of letters! Who so clumsy, so rough do not learn? The very clear Carmenta nymph gave Latin letters; lost in our Castile, this serene diva is looking for it. If we look at their shining all for them, it may not be that we do not find them. If the commands proclaim his greatness: Who knows about the Latin letters that lost Castile, come to say it to his owner, and there will be a good find; by the covetousness prize, more quickly they are found than those who were lost. Honour stops arts, and all turn to study the glory. Do you not see how many started the study admiring the Royals? What kings do, good or bad, all rehearsed to do it. If it is good, it is delighting four ourselves, and if it is bad, it is delighting to them. If the King plays, we were all gamblers; if the Queen studies, we all are now students. And if you confess me right, it is true that here study is the cause of your study; or whether by pleasing her, or it is because you like it, or by envy of those who have begun to follow.

One thing is clear from that time: King John II of Aragon considered in 1475-1476 the protonotary Juan de Lucena a servant of the Cardinal and House of Mendoza⁸⁴.

The disguised complaint of the king [of Aragon]

The king confirmed that the Duke of Burgundy and the King of England had much disdain; and for this reason the protonotary Lucena was persuaded to broker the marriage of the princess and the Dauphin of France; and the King of Aragon came about this information having very little knowledge of the deal. And he said that without consultation with him about talks about marriage the deal should not go through; and although the fault was ascribed to Lucena as he was a servant of the Cardinal and the House of Mendoza, the king must have had sorrowful feelings regarding the Cardinal and the main advisors to the King and Queen and their children who ruled those negotiations.

⁸⁴ **ZURITA, Jerónimo** (1610) *Anales de Aragón*. Libro XIX, Cap. XXI. Cited by **MENÉNDEZ PIDAL, Ramon** (1969). *Historia de España*, dirigida por R. Menéndez Pidal. Tomo XVII, p. 118.

Virgin Mary and Isabella I of Castile

Concentrating now on Virgin Mary in relationship with Isabella I of Castile we observe that the Augustinian monastic Martin de Córdoba⁸⁵ with his work *El Jardin de las donzellas* of 1468 is the first writer who draws equivalencies between Isabella and Virgin Mary⁸⁶, which became one of her standard portrayals.

In one of her studies, Garretas Rivera says⁸⁷:

In the sacristy of the Toro's collegiate there is a painting⁸⁸ called Our Lady of the Fly (La virgen de la mosca) which depicts Mary of Nazareth with her son surrounded by Mary Magdalene and Catherine of Alexandria. Catalina's face is that of the young Isabel the Catholic (...) Isabel wears a crown and has an open book in her lap. Behind Isabel standing in the background an older man - perhaps a prophet or a humanist - looks at her with a book in his hand. Catalina / Isabel occupies the foreground of the picture. The altarpiece - of uncertain authorship - has been attributed to Hans Memling [deceased around 1494]. (...) What is it that Isabel says by the symbol of Catherine of Alexandria? Inspiration, intelligence, wisdom, beauty is what the figure represents; also the force, indicated by a sword half hidden at the

⁸⁵ **CÓRDOBA, Martín Alonso de** (1468) *El Jardin de las donzellas*

⁸⁶ **SÁNCHEZ DUEÑAS, Blas** (2001) Una particular visión de la mujer en el siglo XV: Jardín de nobles doncellas de Fray Martín de Córdoba. In: *Boletín de la Real Academia de Córdoba* 141, pp. 291-299

VAL VALDIVIESO, María Isabel del (2006) Isabel la Católica y la educación. In: *Aragón en la Edad Media*, Nº 19, pp. 555-562

⁸⁷ **RIVERA GARETTAS, María-Milagros** (1998). Catalina de Alejandría, representada en Isabel I de Castilla. In: (Ana Isabel Cerrada Jiménez y Josemi Lorenzo Arribas, eds.) *De los símbolos al orden simbólico femenino (ss. IV-XVII)*. Madrid, Al-Mudayna, 1998, pp. 137-143. Citations in pp. 137 and 142. Cited by **MÉRIDA JIMÉNEZ, Rafael M.** (2013). Transmisión y difusión de la literatura caballeresca. *Doce estudios de recepción cultural hispánica (siglos XIII-XVII)*, pp. 83-84.

⁸⁸

foot of the holy queen. A combination of male and female attributes that the humanistic Isabel perhaps thinks were embodied in her being a woman in the new stage of the history of Castile. Maybe she imagines it and communicates it in this way.



VIRGEN DE LA MOSCA

**Anónimo flamenco. Varias atribuciones. En torno a 1520-1525
Sacristía-Museo de la Colegiata de Santa María la Mayor de Toro
(Zamora)**

The work *El Jardin de nobles doncellas* of Friar Martin de Cordoba, written in 1468, was printed in Valladolid by Juan de Burgos in 1500 and according to Ana Isabel Carrasco Manchado⁸⁹ no manuscript had been preserved. In the eyes of the Church, Isabel had to be the perfect woman equal to the Virgin herself?

Patricia Grieves informs that apparently since the beginning of her reign an observer warned that "many men believed that Isabella had been created miraculously to the redemption of the lost kingdoms"; in fact, the contemporary chronicles referred to the Queen as "the second Virgin Mary" and Cardinal Mendoza proclaimed that the union of Isabella and Fernando was the incarnation of a Christian national identity that would soon unite Spain⁹⁰.

The Church's expectations were very high for Isabella. Finally Grieves remembers the Eulogy (poem) that Diego de San Pedro directs to Queen Isabella I of Castile in the *Tractado de amores de Arnalte y Lucenda*⁹¹:

⁸⁹ **CARRASCO MANCHADO, Ana Isabel** (2005) La toma del poder de Isabel I de Castilla. Golpe a la legitimidad de Enrique IV. In: Coups d'État à la fin du Moyen Âge? Aux fondements du pouvoir politique en Europe occidentale. Casa de Velázquez, Madrid, p. 331-350. Citation in p. 336

⁹⁰ **RUBIN, N.** (1993) Isabel de Castilla. La primera reina del Renacimiento, Madrid, Apóstrofe, p. 220

⁹¹ **SORIANO, Catherine** (1997) Conveniencia política y tópico literario en el *Jardin de nobles doncellas* (1468?) de Fray Martín Alonso de Córdoba. In: Actas del VI Congreso Internacional de la Asociación Hispánica de Literatura Medieval (Alcalá de Henares, 12-16 de septiembre de 1995). Servicio de Publicaciones Universidad de Alcalá. Tomo II, pp. 1457-1466



Jardín de las nobles donzellas, Medina del Campo, 1542.

Poem dedicated to Isabella I of Castile (Arnalte y Lucenda)	Author: Juan Ramirez de Lucena
<p>Es nuestra Reina real en su España assi tenido que del bueno y comunal, de todos en general es amada y es temida; es plaziente a los ajenos, es atajo de entrevalos, es amparo de los menos, es gozo para los buenos, es pena para los malos.</p> <p>Es reina que nunca yerra es freno del desigual, es gloria para la tierra, es la paz de nuestra guerra, es el bien de nuestro mal; es igual a todas suertes de gentes para sus quiebras, es yugo para los fuertes, es vida de nuestras muertes, es luz de nuestras tiniebras.</p> <p>Es tal que, aunque sojuzgase todo cuanto Dios ha fecho, si el mundo se ensanchasse o su valer se estrechasse, no ternía, su derecho; es tal que no había de ser humandad puesta en ella, mas guísola Dios fazer por darnos a conocer quién es El, pues fizo a ella.</p> <p>Es tal que si su conciencia no diesse arriba consuelo, de envidia de su exelencia habría gran diferencia entre la tierra ye el cielo; es tal que por causa d[e] ella habría, aunque oviesse batalla,</p>	<p>Pues ¿quién osara tocar en su grande hermosura? pues quien más piensa hablar en ella havrá de quedar ofendido de locura; es publicar mi defecto en ponerme en la tal cosa, pues no puede haver efecto, si no fuese más discreto o ella menos hermosa.</p> <p>Mas aunque lo diga mal, digo que son las hermosas ante su cara real cual es el pobre metal con ricas piedras preciosas; son con su gran perfección cual la noche con el día, cual con descanso prisión, cual el viernes de Pasión con la Pascua de alegría.</p> <p>E esta que tal pudo ser ha siempre representado en las obras el valer y en la razón el saber, y en la presenencia el estado, y la gran bondad de Aquel que tal gracia puso en ella, la midió por su nivel, porque demos gloria a El cuando miramos a ella.</p> <p>La devida presunción, la mesura más preciada, las obras del galardón, en su real condición tienen tomada posada; es y ha sido siempre una en dar por el vicio pena,</p>

<p>siempre cizaña y centella en la tierra por tenella y en el cielo por llevalla.</p> <p>Es de los vicios ajena, es de virtudes escala, con gran cordura condena, nunca yerra cosa buena, nunca haga cosa mala; teme a Dios y a su sentencia, aboresce la malicia, abráçase con prudencia, perdona con la clemencia, castiga con la justicia.</p> <p>Con cuerdas de fee y firmeza tiene atada la esperança, anima con la franqueza, sojuzga con fortaleza, aplace con la templança; guarnesce con caridad las obras de devoción, gana con la voluntad, conserva con la verdad, gobierna con la razón.</p> <p>Allega los virtuosos, quita daños de entre nos, estraña los maliciosos, reprehende los viciosos, ama a los que aman a Dios; quiere bien los verdaderos, no la engañan los que engañan, aboresce los groseros, desama los lisonjeros, no escucha los que cizañan.</p>	<p>supo vencer la Fortuna no tiene falta ninguna, no tiene cosa no buena.</p> <p>Pues ¿quién podrá recontar, por más que sepa dezir, la gracia de su mirar, el primor de su hablar, la gala de su vestir? su valer es en manera y en tal forma y de tal suerte, que aunque la gala muriera, en sus dechados hoviera la vida para su muerte.</p> <p>¡Oh, cuántas veces contemplo con qué dulces melodías ha de ir al eterno templo! según nos dize su enxiemplo ya después de largos días; y después que así la elijo, pienso con alma elevada en el gozo sin letijo que havrán la Madre y el Hijo con la huéspedada llegada.</p>
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An analysis of the texts of this poem reveals the writing style of the protonotary Juan Ramirez de Lucena⁹². To emphasize the comparison between Isabella I and the Mother of Jesus, Diego de San Pedro 'framed' *Tratado de amores de Arnalte y Lucenda* between a poem in honor of the queen at the beginning of the work, and an extensive 'invocation of Our Lady at the end.

As a result of the succession to the throne in Segovia in December 1474 Isabella I of Castile quickly became the subject of political suspicion and apparent adulation by many poets and writers. Many of these were converted Jews and descendants of those who had converted from Judaism to Christianity in the course of the previous two generations. They often compared the queen directly with the Virgin and there was little difference between the two. Isabel was presented as the pure, perfect woman. 1474 becomes a key date and serves as a point of reference; before it there is chaos, anarchy, impotence; after it, as if by magic, everything becomes tidy: submitted noblemen; nobody bothers the travelers on the roads of Spain, and people can finally work in peace and know they can count on the Catholic Monarchs for justice.

The Franciscan poet friar Inigo de Mendoza composed a panegyric evidently written before 1479] where he put Isabella I of Castile in a place that the Church reserves for the Mother of God in the history of salvation:

Alta reyna esclarecida,
guarnecida
de grandezas muy reales,
a remediar nuestros males
desiguales,

⁹² WESTERVELD, Govert (in press) The Wanderings of the Chess Book Writer Lucena

por gracia de Dios venida;
como quando fue perdida
nuestra vida
por culpa de vna muger [Eva],
nos quiere Dios guarnecer
e rehacer
por aquel modo y medida
que lleuó nuestra caída.

Perhaps the most extravagant of the first part of of Isabella I of Castile's reign is in the *Canción en loor de la Reyna Doña Isabel I de Castilla* composed by the Cordovan poet Anton de Montoro. He was without a doubt a converted Jew and obviously finished his poem between 1474 and 1477. In the *Cancionero de Pedro Guillén de Sevilla* we observe that Montoro compares Isabella I of Castile with Virgin Mary:

Alta Reyna soberana
si fuerades antes vos
que la hija de Sant' Ana,
de vos el Hijo de dios
recibiera carne humana.
Que bella, santa, discreta,
Por espiencia se prueve,
Aquella Virgen perfeta,
La divinidad ecepta,
Esso le debéys que os deve.
Y pues que por vos se gana
La vida y gloria de nos,
si no pariera Sant' Ana
hasta ser nascida vos,
de vos el Hijo de Dios
rescibiera carne humana.

Diego de San Pedro in his *Tractado de amores de Arnalte a Luçenda* (Burgos, 1491) also refers to Virgin Mary by a verse dedicated to Isabella I of Castile and shows her as an image or representation of God.

La más alta maravilla
de cuantas pensar podeis
después de la sin mancilla (Virgin Mary)
es la reina de Castilla ...

Pedro de Cartagena (d. 1486) wrote couplets in honor of the Queen Isabella I of Castile which figure in the book *Cancionero General* by Hernando del Castillo. Here we also see the Queen as a divine being in heaven.

Coplas a la reina doña Isabel
Es que sois mujer entera /
en la tierra la primera /
y en el cielo la segunda

The couplets of Juan Alvarez Gato about Queen Isabella I of Castile are another example of the queen's divine attributes. The couplets were probably written at the end of the 1470s when the poet was in the court of Isabella and Ferdinand. Parts of the poem are reflected here:

De grandes loores digna
la sagrada mano diestra
os hizo muy más veçina
de su Magestad divina
que a la forma común nuestra;
que aunque lo callase yo,
vuestro gesto es buen testigo
de la graçia que vos dio,
y cuánto se travaxó
para ygualaros consigo.

Esta sola diferençia
de Él a vos quiso que uviere,
por guardar su preheminençia
ynfinito se dixese.
Por ende vuestra morada
hizo en este mundo pobre,

do sois peor empleada
que rica perla engastada
en falsa chapa de cobre.

The historians and contemporary chroniclers refer to Isabella I of Castile as superior to women in general and comparable to Virgin Mary and Patricia E. Grieve gives us the best description for that⁹³ taking into account the *Jardin de nobles doncellas* by Friar Martin de Cordoba:

Martín de Córdoba employs the topos of Spain as a paradise and reinforces the fifteenth-century Spanish view that there were two thrones in the universe, God's celestial throne in the East and in the West "la silla del Rey de España" (the throne of the King of Spain), which. If politics played out the way the author hoped and expected, would be occupied not by a "Rey," but for the first time by a "Reina." To imply that the queen of Spain would, in effect, be the ruler of the world was not only bold, but prophetic, given her role as mother of an empire. By describing Mary's reversal of the sin of Eve—"E la Virgen María, Nuestra Señora nos paró la visión de Dios, la qual Eua nos quitó, ca por su glorioso parto fue fecho visible el que primero hera inuisible" (And Virgin Mary, Our Lady, gave birth to the sight of God, which Eve had taken from us, because by that glorious birth was made visible what was before invisible;)—Martín de Córdoba suggests that Isabel will do the same for Spain. Poetically, then, and in the national imaginary of Spain, she will be opposed to La Cava, the Eve of Spanish history. Martín de Córdoba further links Isabel to Virgin Mary by emphasizing that Mary herself was the daughter of kings: "[L]a señora Princesa, por que es de linaje real, como la Virgen que fue fija de reyes, e por que es doncella, como hera la Virgen quando concibio al fijo de Dios, e por que espera de ser reyna, como la Virgen que es Reyna delos cielos, señora delos angeles, madre de los pecadores e manto de todos los fieles." (The Princess, being of royal lineage, just as the Virgin was the daughter of kings, and by being a maiden, as the Virgin was when she conceived the son of God, and because she

⁹³ **GRIEVE, Patricia E.** (2011) *The Eve of Spain; Myths of Origins in the History of Christian, Muslim, and Jewish Conflict*. The Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, Maryland, pp. 85-86

expects to be Queen, as the Virgin is Queen of Heaven, Mistress of the Angels, mother of sinners, and protector of the faithful;). The author returns to this theme of shared qualities between Virgin Mary and the princess when he describes the expected comportment of women who would be rulers. Although all women should incline to piety, as one of their natural virtues, a noblewoman should be the most pious of all (“avn que todas las mugeres sean naturalmente piadosas, pero las grandes lo deuen ser mas que todas”);).

Amy G. Remensnyder investigated martial aspects of Virgin Mary⁹⁴. On the other hand Elizabeth Lehfeltd⁹⁵ made clear that Virgin Mary became a model for Isabella I as ruling queen:

One of Isabel’s favorite poets, fray Iñigo de Mendoza wrote that she had come by the grace of God to rescue the people whose lives had been lost by the sin of “una muger,” which is to say Eve. By the twelfth century theologians had drawn parallels between the Virgin and a woman prophesied in the Book of Genesis: “I will put enmities between thee and the woman, and thy seed and her seed: she shall crush thy head, and thou shalt lie in wait for her heel.” This portrayal of the woman crushing the serpent’s head was the promised redemption offered by Mary. Isabel’s association with this image mitigated her sexuality and her bearing of Eve’s punishment of the pains of childbirth. Yet childbirth could, properly modeled and fashioned, also be redemptive. Although she had already given birth to a daughter Juana in 1470, a greater outpouring of enthusiasm greeted the birth of Isabel’s first son Juan in 1478. With this act Isabel, in the eyes of her chroniclers and contemporaries, delivered Spain into the long-promised Golden Age. She had provided a male heir to

⁹⁴ REMENSNYDER, Amy G. (2000) The Colonization of Sacred Architecture: The Virgin Mary, Mosques, and Temples in Medieval Spain and Early Sixteenth-Century Mexico,” in *Monks and Nuns, Saints and Outcasts: Religious Expression and Social Meaning in the Middle Ages*, ed. Sharon Farmer and Barbara Rosenwein (Ithaca, N.Y: Cornell University Press, 2000), pp. 189-219

⁹⁵ LEHFELDT, Elizabeth A. (2000) Ruling Sexuality: The Political Legitimacy of Isabel of Castile. In: *Renaissance Quarterly* 53, pp. 31-46

the throne. Here the parallels with the Virgin were obvious. Mary had offered the world the ultimate redemption: the son of God. Isabel offered a similar redemption. She gave Castile an indisputable male heir who stood in a direct line to the throne. Pulgar suggested that God had chosen Isabel especially, rather than seeking the succession of the throne in either the offspring of Enrique or Alfonso (Isabel's brother who had died in 1468). In this Isabel had redeemed the ultimate imperfection of her own ascendance to the throne: the lack of a male heir. Yet just as Mary's human role in Christ's birth raised questions for some about her sinful nature and cast doubt on her purity, so, too, Isabel's redemptive powers in bringing forth a human son who would act as Spain's savior, seemed potentially compromised. Mary, despite her participation in the birth of the Savior, had been granted virginal status. Hers was a conception free from the sin of sexual intercourse. From the days of the early Church, however, debate surrounded Mary's concupiscence or participation in original sin. Mary needed to be preserved from all sin in order to be "the sole proper instrument by which God became man." Although a subject of controversy into the nineteenth century before it was resolved by the papal bull *Ineffabilis Deus*, the resolution was the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception, according to which Mary was free from the burden of sin and sinful desires." Spanish intellectuals would offer a similar solution for Isabel. Her redemptive role would be likened to Mary's and although Isabel of course remained fully human, parallels were drawn between her purity and the Immaculate Conception." Devotion to the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception was particularly enthusiastic in Spain in the late Middle Ages and Renaissance. It seems to have been cultivated most prodigiously first in Aragon and Barcelona, owing largely to its championing by the famous mystic Ramón Lull."

As a member of the intellectually active court of Bishop Alonso de Cartagena, Juan Ramirez de Lucena had likely developed curiosity for anything new early in his life, which was further stimulated when his protector sent him to Italy to enter the service of the humanist Pope, Pius II (1458).

Alonso de Cartagena (1384-1456), the distinguished Bishop, diplomat, historian, courtier, and precursor of Spanish humanism was one of the major figures among these *Converso* theologians. Alonso de Cartagena (1384-1456) continued his father's path as Bishop of Burgos and also elaborated on the idea that Santa Maria family were scions of both the tribe of Levi and of Virgin Mary.

So the adoration to Virgin Mary was not new to the converted Juan Ramirez de Lucena who wrote *Vita Beata*, a fictitious dialogue between Juan de Mena, Alonso de Cartagena, and the marqués de Santillana.

According to the historian Palencia from 1475 the king was dominated by "mad love" for his wife (coactus insano erga amore uxoris) while Isabella was becoming a dubious person with unwillingness both in the domestic and public sphere". In 1479 Palencia summarizes the situation in this way: "The Queen had for a long time been preparing something that according to the judgment of a prudent man is not suitable for future succession of these kingdoms: reducing the influence of her husband, just in case by her death there was any contingency in the regular course of heredity if she died earlier than her husband⁹⁶."

The chronicler seems to allude to the determination of Isabella I of Castile that her first daughter, also named Isabella, would succeed her if necessary to the Castilian throne. Both her husband and his supporters naturally felt that he should be the heir, something that Isabella did not agree to even in his will and codicil of October and November 1504.

⁹⁶ **PALENCIA, Alfonso de** (ed. 1970-1974): *Cuarta Década, estudio, texto latino y traducción castellana*, ed. de J. López de Toro, Madrid, Real Academia de la Historia, 2 vols., pp. 2, 38, 48, 164, 192. Cited by **EDWARDS, John** (2004). *Isabel la Católica: poder y fama*, p. 71.



Madonna of the Catholic Monarchs (Fernando Gallego, 1490-1495)

In any event, Alfonso de Palencia⁹⁷ described Isabella as a "master of disguises and deceptions" as a direct result of his criticism of the queen and defending his professional integrity in Toledo in 1480⁹⁸.

⁹⁷ **SANTA MARIA, Luys** (1958). *Isabel la Católica*, pp. 15-58 and 61-71. Cited by **EDWARDS, John** (2004). *Isabel la Católica: poder y fama*, p. 71.

⁹⁸ **TATE, Robert Brian**. (1994). *Políticas sexuales: de Enrique el Impotente a Isabel, maestra de engaños*. In: **HITCHCOCK, Richard & PENNY, Ralph**, eds., *Actas del Primer Congreso Anglo-Hispano, III: Historia. In memoriam Derek Lomax*, Madrid, pp. 165-176. Cited by **EDWARDS, John** (2004). *Isabel la Católica: poder y fama*, p. 71.

Was it the intentional campaign of propaganda used by Isabella to raise herself as an equally pure woman as the Virgin?

Lucio Marineo Sículo⁹⁹ said that Isabella had “desires of high praises and clear fame”. Isabella, now with the help of Pedro González de Mendoza, knew how to use the church for her cause.

Castilla would be a valuable ally for the papacy, and the Pope could use this alliance to weaken either Aragon or France, the two main external threats in Italian politics. The great power of Castile and decline of the Crown of Aragon markedly towards Castilian habits explain the character of modern Spain. Bernat Fenollar, the poet who made the new rules in *Scachs d'amor*, already felt the changes in an early stage.

Le Roman de la Rose, started by Guillaume de Lorris ca. 1230 with 4000 verses and completed in a different style in ca. 1270-80 by Jean de Meun with 1800 verses. This time with chess allegories made under Jacobus de Cessolis's book. *De moribus hominum et de officiis nobilium super ludo scaccorum* was written between 1300 and 1330 by Jacobus de Cessolis, was a very popular chess book in the Middle Ages because it talks about morality and good government. Evrart de Conty had his inspiration from *Roman de la Rose* and the work of Jacques de Cessolis, writing a chess work in verse called *Les eschéz d'amour* (*Eschés amoureux*) around 1375. In 1405 we see appear his work *Le livre des eschéz amoureux moralisés* that was written in prose. The manuscript *Scachs d'amor* was under French influence and for the first time in Spain we see the

⁹⁹ **FERNÁNDEZ DE CÓRDOVA MIRALLES, Álvaro** (2005) Imagen de los Reyes Católicos en la Roma pontificia. In: *En la España Medieval*, 28, pp. 259-354. Citation in p. 263.

word “dama” appear. Maybe it also had to do with the *Le Champion des dames*, a work written by Martin Le Franc between 1442 and 1443 and dedicated to Philip the Good of Burgundy¹⁰⁰.

Strangely enough the poem of *Scachs d'amor* was never published in any work, although the changes of the queen and bishop were new and rather important. Until now nobody could give an explanation for the new increasing move of the bishop, precisely at the time of the new queen Isabella I of Castile. This was also silenced in literature. Could the poets not publish this poem due to possible problems with the justice or King Ferdinand II? Why could they not change the name of the alfil to that of the Bishop in the poem? Was any or everyone afraid to give too much power to Pedro Gonzalez de Mendoza?

The Satiric School in Valencia

Bernard Fenollar formed part of the Satiric School in Valencia and was known for his satiric compositions.

Rafael Alemany¹⁰¹ let us know that if the crown is gradually deselecting the direction of cultural life and the religious establishment restricts the social dimension of its influence, it is clear that the stimulus that allows the 14th-century literary splendor comes from other classes. As for Valencia in particular, these are the local gentry and urban patriciate. Both will become the real drivers of the letters of the

¹⁰⁰ **LHÔTE, Jean-Marie** (2002) Martin Le Franc et la dame enragée. In: Board Game Studies, 5, pp. 105-110

¹⁰¹ **ALEMAN Y FERRER, Rafael** (2000) Ausiàs March y las letras valencianas del s. XV: vasos comunicantes. In: Altra ed.: Lourdes Sánchez Rodrigo i Enrique J. Nogueras Valdivieso (eds.), Ausiàs March y las literaturas de su época, Granada, Universidad de Granada, 2000, pp. 111-131.

fifteenth century who benefit from the great possibilities that gave the printing houses in this city. In this context occurs one of the most significant cultural developments: the emergence of new platforms such as the literary circles on the one hand and poetry contests on the other hand. An example of the literary circles is Bernat Fenollar's poetic circle where Jaume Gassull, Narcís Vinyoles, Francesc de Castellví, Joan Moreno, et al are integrated. All these writers are characterized by cultivating poetry, especially but not exclusively satirical, in which the burlesque treatment of erotic and sexual material acquires a notable role, as well as the fact of producing their work collaboratively: indeed, the great constants of this literary circle are works written by more than one author, debates, questions, and answers.

Jaume Roig (ca. 1400-1478), author of *Espill* or *Llibre de les dones*, started with the Valencian satiric school. One can say that the author of *Espill* did not hate women insofar as can be seen in the work, but his misogyny was rather moralistic burlesque, in line with the Valencian Satirical School. *Espill* would be a book destined for reading by men of that time and the fact that Roig presented an exaggerated misogyny would provoke ridicule and laughter in the reader. With all this one cannot deny the misogynist nature of this work. *Espill* incorporates all antifeminist stereotypes of the Middle Ages because all the evils, all the vileness and possible crimes are attributed to women, and they have been the cause of all the ills of humanity. Only two are the exception: the Virgin Mary and Isabel Pellisser.

Was the poem intended as politic propaganda for Isabel I of Castile who had the same characteristics as the Virgin Mary

or wanted the poets to mock the queen? Maybe Prof. Alcalá¹⁰² is right when he states:

Yo creo ver en todo esto de que la reina del ajedrez personifique a Isabel más que un elogio una especie de ironía, de tomadura de pelo por parte, precisamente, de tratadistas (Lucena, los valencianos) que o no están a su servicio, sino de Fernando, o no son ni siquiera castellanos¹⁰³, por lo cual tenían que alimentar cierto resentimiento contra una mujer que había haciendo desde el primer momento de su coronación y seguía haciendo todo lo posible para mangonear y mandar más que su marido, contra lo que tradicionalmente había pasado siempre. Me puedo imaginar a los tahures, al mover la nueva reina mandona, diciendo en las tabernas y las casas de juego: "Aí va, la mandona, la mujerona, la virago!!!"

Translation:

I believe in all this that the chess queen does not personify Isabel I of Castile with eulogy, but rather a kind of irony, teasing by precisely from writers (Lucena, Valencian poets) who are not in her service, but in the service of Fernando. They are not even Castilians, so they had to feed resentment against a woman who since the first moment of her coronation was making every effort to bully and command more than her husband, contrary to what traditionally had always been the habit. I can imagine the gamblers moving the bossy new queen, saying in taverns and gambling dens: 'Here is the bossy big woman, the virago¹⁰⁴!!!'

Interesting to see is the signification of virago in relationship with the term dama:

A virago is a woman who demonstrates exemplary and heroic qualities. The word comes from the Latin word *vir* meaning 'man' to which the suffix -ago is added, a suffix that ...

¹⁰² Personal communication

¹⁰³ With exemption of Juan Ramírez de Lucena

¹⁰⁴ A virago is a woman who demonstrates exemplary and heroic qualities. The word comes from the Latin word *vir* meaning 'man' to which the suffix -ago is added.

In the Spanish draughts game we know the term virol¹⁰⁵ that also has to do with the term dama:

Virol se entiende cuando se tiene encerrada en una calle por donde corre á una dama enemiga sin poder salir de ella.

Translation:

Virol means a position when you have locked in a line the enemy lady (dama), making it impossible for her to leave.

Whatever will be the reason of the sudden change of weak chess queen in powerful chess queen in Valencia, one thing is clear with respect to her name abroad. There the powerful was received in a mocky way:

échecs de la dame <i>enragée</i> “	- France
“alla rabiosa”	- Italy
“Welsches-Schachspiel	- Germany
“Mad Queen Chess”	- Great Britain

The control that the Church exercised was felt throughout the peninsula in those years. The Virgin Mary was adored by the whole population. That was the reason, that we see appear in Valencia many books about the Virgin Mary. Worth mentioning is the fact that in the book *Homeliasobre lo psalm “De profundis”*, printed in the printing house of Lambert Palmart, readers see a splendid image of the Virgin Mary¹⁰⁶.

¹⁰⁵ **PIFERRER, Juan Francisco** (1839) *Juego de las damas*, Barcelona, p. 3
GARCÍA CANALEJAS, Juan (1650) *Libro del juego de las damas dividido en tres tratados*, Zaragoza, p. 95

¹⁰⁶ **FUSTER, Jeronim** (1490). *Homelia sobre lo psalm “De profundis”*.

Date	Author	Work
1487.04.14	DIEZ, Fernando	Obra de la sacratissima concepció de la Verge Maria. Valencia: Lambert Palmart, 14 Apr. 1487
1493.01.11	FENOLLAR, Bernat MARTINEZ, Pere	Història de la passió de N.S. Jesu Christi en cobles. Add: Johan Scrivá: Contemplació a Jesus crucificat. Joan Roïç de Corella: Oració a la S. Verge Maria tenint son fill Jesus deualat de la creu. Valencia: [Peter Hagembach and Leonardus Hutz], for Jacobus de Villa.
1494.07.25	PEREZ, Miguel	Vida de la Verge Maria. Valencia: Nicolaus Spindeler.
1495.02.16	SAXONIA, Ludolphus de	Vita Christi [Catalan] Lo quart del Cartoxá (Tr: Joan Roïç de Corella). Add: Joan Roïç de Corella: Oració a la S. Verge Maria tenint son fill Jesus deualat de la creu. Valencia: [Peter Hagembach and Leonardus Hutz].
1495.11.06	SAXONIA, Ludolphus de	<u>Vita Christi [Catalan] Lo quart del Cartoxá (Tr: Joan Roïç de Corella).</u> Add: <u>Joan Roïç de Corella: Oració a la S. Verge Maria tenint son fill Jesus deualat de la creu.</u> Valencia: [Lope de la Roca, for Miquel Albert].



Draw of the Virgin Mary in the book *Homelia sobre lo psalm “De profundis”*

The unfortunate Maria de Castilla

Outside Castile the wife of Alfonso V of Aragon (Alfonso the Magnanimous) and daughter of Henry III occupied an important place in history. Her name was Maria de Castilla and she excelled in the chronicle as a positive model for the

Queen. She was the aunt of Isabel I of Castile and highlighted the key benchmark of claiming politic leadership by Isabel. This Maria de Castilla:

Governó los reynos de Aragón por espacio de treynta años seyendo absente su marido ocupado en la guerra de Napol con tanta prudencia e justicia que los tobo este tiempo en tanta paz e concordia como nunca antes ni después estuvieron, e bivió en tanta honestad que por todos fue llamada espeio de limpieza e de toda bondad e no menos a toda virtud se dio¹⁰⁷.

Translation:

Governed the kingdoms of Aragón for thirty years while her husband was absent due to being occupied in the war of Naples. She did it with so much prudence and justice in those years that peace and harmony were obtained as never before and neither thereafter. This queen lived in such way of honesty that she was called mirror of cleanness and all goodness and not least of all virtue.

Agusti Mezquida considers that the appearance of the dama (lady) in *Scachs d'amor* (1475) could be more related to Maria of Castile (1401-1458), the consort of Alfonso the Magnanimous (1396-1458). However, this unfortunate queen was disowned by her husband for thirty years and she never was more important than Alfonso the Magnanimous. On the contrary the king did not mention her in his testament and had children by Lucrecia de Alagno (ca. 1430-1479) whom he could not marry. Although the king requested to marry Lucrecia, Pope Calixto III did not agree to repudiate his wife Maria de Castile.

¹⁰⁷ VALERA, Diego de (1959) *Tratado de las epístolas*, Biblioteca de Autores Españoles, vol. CXVI, Madrid, 1959, fol. 153v.



**King Alfonso the Magnanimous in his chamber of the royal palace,
accompanied by his confessor Fray Joan of Casanova.**



**Maria de Castilla represented in the book of privilegis i ordinacions
dels Hortolans de Sant Antoni de Barcelona (ordinances and
privileges of the Sant Antoni's Gardeners of Barcelona)
(Historical Archives of the City of Barcelona,
Fund guild 2-1 XV-century).**

Quite different was the situation for Isabella I of Castile who had preeminence over Ferdinand who was an instrument of blind obedience to Isabel. Apart from that

there is a problem of time; Maria de Castile died about twenty years earlier than the date of the poem *Scachs d'amor*. Isabella did not want to live like her aunt and had taken the necessary steps to avoid that. With regards to the preeminence Alfonso de Palencia said¹⁰⁸:

The new queen is preceded by Gutierrez de Cardenas who takes a naked sword caught by the tip, the handle up, in the Spanish style, so that, seen by all, even the most distant approaching knew that she would punish the guilty with real authority. This was not a custom of queens. Ferdinand did not please it. This lust for power by the queen would be a cause of constant friction. It was a clear and evident sign of her preeminence over Fernando.

The use of the sword could not cause astonishment to the three poets of *Scachs d'amor* in the kingdom of Aragon, contrary to the assertions of Palencia. Although women of royal blood were displaced from the ownership of the throne, they had an important and effective role as governors or lieutenants of the king in this kingdom when the king was not personally there to exercise power or justice. In the minds of many it would not be possible to erase the image of Mary of Castile, wife of Alfonso the Magnanimous who met other representatives of the kingdom in councils, courts, and assemblies. The figure of Maria of Castile has been immortalized precisely in a legislative assembly before Barcelona's councilors, sitting on her throne with crown and sword in hand, symbolizing justice as shown in the illustration on the cover of the gloss

¹⁰⁸ **PALENCIA, Alonso.** (1904-1914) *Crónica de Enrique IV escrita en latín por Alfonso de Palencia*. Traducida y prologada por Antonio Paz y Melia. Madrid, Década II, libro II, p. 155^a. Década III, libro III, p. 46^a y Década III, libro II p. 292^a: “*Castellani autem regem suum incusabant quod neglexisset opem fere suis et opes multas hosti dimisisset in opprobrium clademque suorum atque hostium sublimationem*”.

of the *Comentaris dels Usatges* of Barcelona, dedicated to the very queen by the author James Marquilles¹⁰⁹.



Folio of the *Commentaria super Usaticis Barchinonensis* (*Comentaris dels Usatges de Barcelona*).
Legal work of James Marquilles (1448-1450)

¹⁰⁹ **CARRASCO MANCHADO, Ana Isabel** (2006) *Isabel I de Castilla y la sombra de la ilegitimidad: propaganda y representación en el conflicto sucesorio (1474-1482)*. Madrid, p. 30

Conclusion:

The introduction of a new powerful chess queen took place in Spain. According to Cessolis, the order of the board pieces of Chess is the order of the world. Martín de Córdoba, in 1468, linked Isabel I of Castile to Virgin Mary. This new game had to do with the term Virgin Mary when the three poets participated in a hymn competition of 1474 to the Holy Virgin. We see one year later, in 1475, the activity of Dr. Miguel Albert as protector of the printing houses and a poem by the three poets about this new powerful chess queen. Twenty years later, in 1495, as a print shop owner Dr. Miguel Albert also edited with the German printers Peter Trincer and Lope de la Roca (Wolf of Stone) the unfortunately lost chess book of Vicent Francesch. It is known that the protonotary Juan Ramirez de Lucena was already in the Aragonese court around 1468 and that he was one of the advisers of the young prince Ferdinand II, the future husband of queen Isabella I of Castile. Virgin Mary's influence was great in those years and the church extended it in Valencia to the chessboard. The man who had influence in the court to change the rules of the chess game was the protonotary Juan Ramírez de Lucena, follower of the pope Pius II. He was a great admirer of Isabella I of Castile and his protector was the archbishop of Seville and great cardinal of Spain, Pedro Gonzalez de Mendoza. Due to his travelling abroad he was aware of the necessary chess manuscripts and chess positions that later resulted in a chess book printed by his son Lucena in 1495. The manuscript of "Scachs d'amor" was written in 1475, precisely in the year of pestilence in Valencia and when the influence of Queen Isabella I of Castile reached the peak of her power against her husband Ferdinand II of Aragon. And so we see appear Isabella I of Castile, as the Virgin Mary, on the chessboard.

CHAPTER III.

ISABELLA I OF CASTILE, THE NEW POWERFUL DAMA IN CHESS

In this Chapter, I give the present state of acceptance of the new powerful chess queen in chess and draughts. According to my hypothesis this was Isabella I of Castile. This proposition has been accepted throughout the world in all these years. However, since there are still opponents to this theory, it is necessary to find additional proofs. In this article I give the opponents' theories and the development of my hypothesis over the years. I explain why in the monarchs' sphere the Kingdom of Castile became more important than the kingdom of Aragon in Spain and that consequently Castilian habits were quickly accepted by the Aragonese courtiers. Finally, I hope to make clear that the word "dama" was imported from France in the XV century.

Isabella I of Castile, the new powerful chess queen

The model for the great revolution that took place in chess (and gave rise to the origin of Spanish draughts a few years later) was none other than Queen Isabella I of Castile (Spanish: Isabel la Católica), the powerful Lady on the scene of Spanish public life. Years ago José Antonio Garzón Roger found conclusive evidence in the poem after a pertinent review of the manuscript *Scachs d'amor* and a summary of his research follows¹¹⁰:

A notable aspect of the manuscript is its explicit allusions to the alteration of the chess game, which gives the impression that it was happening at that very moment, using very clear expressions, always with reference to the Queen: *still nouell, la ley de nostre escola* ('a new style, the rules of our school'). The most important stanza is number 54:

Stanza 54

Fenollar. (Diu que la Reyna vagie axi com tots,
sino Cavall)

478 Mas nostre joch de nou vol enremar se
479 stíl novel e strany a qui bel mira,
480 prenent lo pom, lo ceptr'e la cadira.
481 car, sobretot, la Reyna fa honrar se.
482 Donchs, puix que diu que mes val e mes tira,
483 per tot lo camp pot mol be passegar se,
484 mas tocre no, per temor ni per ira.
485 Quant mes se veu la libertat altiva,
486 mes tembre deu de caure may cativa.

Prose translation (after Miquel i Planas, 1914):

"I say that the Queen shall have the moves of all
the pieces save the Knight."

¹¹⁰ **GARZÓN ROGER, José Antonio** (2004) *Scachs d'amor*. The definitive Proof of the Valencian Origins of Modern Chess. In **WESTERVELD, Govert** (2004) *La reina Isabel la Católica, su reflejo en la dama poderosa de Valencia, cuna de ajedrez moderno y origen del juego de damas*. In collaboration with José Antonio Garzón Roger, Valencia. Generalidad Valenciana, Secretaria Autonómica de Cultura.

But our game still wants to adorn itself with a new and surprising style for mainly the Queen's dignity is enhanced, as she is given the sword, the sceptre and the throne. Therefore, since it is said that she is the most worthy one and the most achieving, may she stroll with ease through the entire field, albeit without straying, for fear or anger. The greater her freedom, the more she should fear being made captive".

Fenollar

"I say that the Queen shall have the moves of all the pieces save the Knight."

But our game still wants to adorn itself with a new and surprising style for mainly the Queen's dignity is enhanced, as she is given the sword, the sceptre and the throne. This brief text is one of the most important in the History of Chess, because it implies that they are the ones who created the new piece¹¹¹ and anticipates the surprise that her move would cause. Again it is clear that an existing Queen (Isabella I of Castile) was being evoked because a surprisingly precise description of an important real-life event is mentioned:

Queen Isabella I of Castile was crowned in the Alcázar of Segovia on 13 December 1474. The sword of justice was raised in front of the Queen just as the sceptre and the throne were given to her. This historic episode was included by the poets in the written passage where it is presented as a very new and surprising event on the chessboard.

¹¹¹ In Garzon's opinion this is the heart of the matter and he was able to prove it to the Italian historian Alessandro Sanvito in a letter. The following is a paragraph taken from that letter:

"...numerous references are made in the poem to the change of rules and it makes the statement that it was this school - the Valencian one - that proposed the Queen's new range of movements. The fact that they are introducing this new piece is much more important to me than even the date, because it indicates that it is not necessary to research any further. As you know, all this movement occurred in Valencia during its Golden Age when it had a very active trade with Italy. The first 3 known books on the game of draughts were published in this same city (in the 16th century) with the peculiarity that the key piece, as in chess, went through profound transformation. This has been analysed in detail by Govert Westerveld, an authority on the subject!"

This cannot be a coincidence and it follows that the poem was written after the coronation of the Queen (c.1475) but not much later, because the idea of newness is inherent in the entire poem.

It also calls our attention that when the Queen's power is described, it is said that she has the power of all the pieces except that of the Knight¹¹², whereas nowadays we would say that this piece's range of movement is a combination of the Rook and the Bishop. But the poets' formula is eloquent: they created a piece that unites the strength and virtues of all of her people (including the King). This cannot be coincidental, either.



Queen Isabella I of Castile (Juan de Flandes – Palacio del Pardo in Madrid)

The sword of Justice was brought before the queen and this we clearly see in the stanza 54 of *Scachs d'amor* discovered

¹¹²Lucena makes the only clarification here about the rules that can be strictly attributed to him: the possibility that in the first move the promoted queen could behave as a Knight: “the game that I use”, Lucena says. Therefore the source for this book, especially in regards to modern chess, Vicent's manual, contained the remaining rules, which Lucena transcribed: the rules of the queen's chess.

by Garzón. The writer of chronicles of the monarchs Diego de Valera wrote about this coronation¹¹³:

La serenísima reyna mandó fazer en la plaza de Segovia un muy alto asentamiento, donde fue puesto su Escudo Real. Y ella, adornada muy ricamente, quanto convenía a tan alta reyna e princesa, estuvo allí algún espacio; donde los oficiales de armas en alta voz denunciaron a todos la sublimación de al serenísima reyna doña Isabel, única legítima heredera successora de estos reynos de Castilla e de León después de la muerte del rey don Enrique su hermano. Lo qual se fizo con gran sonido de trompetas, atabales e tamborinos, e otros diversos instrumentos, con universal alegría de todos los nobles e ciudadanos e populares que allí estaban. E desde allí la reyna se fue a la iglesia mayor, en una hacanea muy ricamente atabiada las camas, que llevaban los más nobles que allí se hallaron, llevándole encima un paño de brocado muy rico. Y delante de ella iba cavalgando un gentil hombre de su casa, de noble linage, llamado Gutierre de Cárdenas, a quien el rey e la reyna después ficeron muy grandes mercedes, or señalados servicios que les fizo; el qual llevaba delante de ella, en la mano derecha, una espada desnuda de la vayna, a demostrar a todos como a ella convenia punir e castigar los malhechores, como reyna e señora natural de estos reynos e señoríos. Lo qual por algunos fue mucho reprehendido; queriendo decir que esto no pertenece a la reyna, mas al rey su marido, tomando para ello fundamento de algunas leyes que declaran acerca de las mugeres no aver lugar de juzgar. Lo qual es verdad generalmente en las mugeres; pero de la regla son exemptadas las reynas, duquesas e señoras, que por derecho hereditario les pertenece a sus señorías que tengan mero y misto imperio. E como la reyna nuestra señora fuesse y sea señora soberana en estos reynos, pudo y debió facer lo propio que si el rey fuera presente: e aunque esta sublimación de ambos a dos juntamente se debiesse facer, como si ambos deputados, el marido e la muger, una misma carne fuessen; mas como el rey fuesse absente, y no se supiesse quán presto sería su venida, la tardanza de esta sublimación pudiera ser dañosa (como la preclaríssima reyna doña Isabel tuviesse competidora en doña Juana, que fija del rey don Enrique se llamaba, e aun que algunos, aunque contra toda verdad, la querían por tal tener) de

¹¹³ **VALERA, Diego de** (1480/1927) *Crónica de los Reyes Católicos* / Mosén Diego de Valera; edición y estudio por Juan de M. Carriazo, p. 4

hecho se pudo e debió facer, e fue descreta e sabiamente puesto en obra.

Translation:

The serene Queen commanded to do a very high settlement, in which her Royal Shield was put, in “Plaza de Segovia”. And she, richly adorned, as suited to such an important queen and princess, was there for some time; where officers of arms loudly denounced all the sublimation of the Most Serene Queen Isabella I, heiress and only legitimate successor of these kingdoms of Castile and Leon after the death of King Henry, her brother. This was done with the great sound of trumpets, drums, tambourines, and other instruments, with universal joy of all nobles and citizens and public who were there. And from there the queen went to the cathedral in a hackney with very richly dressed beds carried by the noblest there were found, bringing up a rich brocade cloth. And before her was riding a gentleman from her house of noble lineage called Gutierre de Cardenas, whom the king and the queen later did very great favors or signaled service for the work done by him. He had before him in the right hand a naked sword from its sheath to show everyone how it suited her to punish and castigate wrongdoers as queen and natural lady of these kingdoms and dominions. This for some of them was much reprovéd, meaning that it does not belong to the queen, but to the king, her husband, taking into account some laws that declare that women should not judge. That is generally true for women, but queens, duchesses, and ladies who by hereditary right belong to their Lordships that have grouper and mixed empire are exempt from this rule. And as Our Lady Queen was and is the sovereign lady in these kingdoms, she could and should do the same as if the king were present: and though this sublimation of them both together was due to do, as if the two deputies, the husband and woman, were one flesh; but as the king was absent, and no one knew how soon would be his coming, the lateness of this sublimation could be harmful (because *preclarisima* Queen Isabella I had competition in Dona Juana, a called daughter of King Henry, and seeing that some, but against all truth, wanted her as queen) in fact she could and should do, and she was discreet and it was wisely put to work.



José Antonio Garzón Roger

Noteworthy is the long study of José Antonio Garzón Roger that he effected in 2010 with reference to the new documents relating to the addiction of the Catholic Monarchs to chess¹¹⁴.

Opponents to this hypothesis

Although generally accepted in the whole world, there are presently three opponents to the hypothesis that Isabella I of Castile is the new powerful chess queen.

¹¹⁴ **GARZÓN ROGER, José Antonio** (2010) Nuevos documentos relativos a la afición de los Reyes Católicos al ajedrez. In: Luca D'Ambrosio et al. (Ed), Publicación Jubilar en honor de Alessandro Sanvito. Contribuciones internacionales sobre Historia y Bibliografía del ajedrez. Vindobono, pp. 251-271.

1. Agustí Mezquida (Catalonia Autonomous Community¹¹⁵)

The filmmaker Agustí Mezquida made his own chess history to promote his film *La Dama dels Escacs* (The Chess Lady) that was partly financed by CulturArts of Valencia. He made his own hypothesis without any background of chess history and so we saw the following text figure in most Spanish newspapers¹¹⁶ on 17 November 2014:

Es en el poema alegórico *Scachs d'Amor*, datado en 1475 y obra de tres autores valencianos, donde por primera vez se menciona la aparición de la dama en el juego, con lo que quedaría descartado que esta pieza se inspirara en la figura de la reina Isabel la Católica.

Translation:

It is in the allegorical poem *Scachs d'Amor* dated 1475 and by three Valencian authors where the appearance of the *dama* (lady) in the game is mentioned for the first time, which would rule out that this piece was inspired by the figure of the queen Isabella I of Castile.

¹¹⁵ It is necessary to observe the latest development in Spain with regards to the communities. Today we witness multiple identities in decentralized Spain. Spain currently has 17 autonomous communities [or provinces]: Catalonia, Madrid, Andalusia, Valencia, Basque Country, Castile and León, Galicia, the Canary Islands, Castile-La Mancha, Aragon, Murcia, the Balearic Islands, Asturias, Navarre, Extremadura, Cantabria, and La Rioja. The persistence of dual self-identification expressed by citizens in the Spanish autonomous communities [or provinces] (nationalities and regions) can lead to confusion in historical research.

¹¹⁶ See:

<http://www.elmundo.es/comunidad-valenciana/2014/11/17/546a0da1e2704e08268b458e.html>



The author participating in the film *La Dama dels Escacs*, in 2012.

Those who know the chess history are well aware that the weak piece known as *dame* (lady) was used as queen in chess in France for several centuries, so the statement that the *appearance of the dama (lady) in the game is mentioned for the first time* is not true. Other newspapers followed Mezquida and arbitrarily changed certain words, and so we see the following text¹¹⁷ appearing on www.thinkspain.com on 6 December 2014:

The allegorical poem *Scachs d'Amor* written jointly by three authors in 1475 in an early form of *Catalán*, the language spoken on the east coast of Spain and which evolves into *Valenciano* between the provinces of Castellón and Alicante, mentions the queen for the first time, proving that she was not, as originally believed, based upon Isabella I of Castile.

¹¹⁷ See:

<http://www.thinkspain.com/news/versionimprimir.asp?x=34tger634sdg34&y=5346345645634&CodNoticia=25214>

Scriptwriter and director Agustí Mezquida believes it more likely the chess queen was based upon María of Castilla, consort of King Alfonso the Magnanimous, although chess expert Marilyn Yalom of Stanford University in the USA believes that the chess queen does not come from one specific figure, but from several ones, since centuries ago queens began to play a much greater role in governing.

A similar notice appeared in the ABC newspaper on 8 March 2014. Suddenly the work of José Antonio Garzón Roger who confirmed my hypothesis of the new powerful chess queen, and my own research of the latest 25 years were made to look worthless. Fortunately José Antonio Garzón Roger contacted ABC citing the history of the actual development of the new powerful lady in chess and ABC amended Mezquida's article of March 8, 2014 to the one of March 11, 2014:

Estos hechos están documentados y a los investigadores, con José Antonio Garzón a la cabeza, les consta que la obra de Vicent ayudó a popularizar el nuevo poder que adquirió la dama (o reina) en tiempos de Isabel la Católica, aunque se citan otras influencias, como María de Castilla y otras monarcas occidentales. En cualquier caso, aquella pieza conocida hasta entonces como alferza, de alcance limitado, se convirtió en la más poderosa del tablero, suceso trascendente del que ya se había hecho eco el poema «Scachs de amor», datado en 1475. Garzón, en concreto, considera que la figura de Isabel la Católica como modelo real de la nueva dama del ajedrez goza de consenso internacional. «El investigador holandés Govert Westerveld es quien estudió y acreditó la cuestión», asegura.

Translation:

These facts are documented and researchers with José Antonio Garzón at the helm are aware that Vicent's work helped popularize the new power acquired by the queen (or queen) in the times of Isabella I the Catholic, although other influences are mentioned, such as Maria de Castilla and other western monarchs. In any case, that piece alferza known until then,

limited in move, became the most powerful on the board, a transcendent event that had already echoed the poem *Scachs d'amor* from 1475. Garzon in particular considers that the figure of Isabella I of Castile as a real model of the new chess lady enjoys international consensus. "It is the Dutch researcher Govert Westerveld who studied and credited the issue" he says.

2. Professor Antoni Ferrando I Francés (Valencian Autonomous Community)

Maybe the filmmaker Agustí Mezquida was influenced by Prof. Antoni Ferrando I Francés who is a true expert on the poem *Scachs d'amor* written by the three poets Francesc Castellví, Narcís Vinyoles, and Bernat Fenollar. Professor Ferrando I Francés cannot agree to the hypothesis of Isabella I of Castile either¹¹⁸:

Hi ha alguns estudiosos dels escac que veuen en la prohibicion que les reines lluiten entre elles una allusio al conflicte entre la reina isabel la catolica i la seua germanastra¹¹⁹ juana la beltraneja

¹¹⁸ **FERRANDO I FRANCÉS, Antoni** (2012) Noves aportacions a Narcís Vinyoles. Edició de Lo «Credo in Deum» aplicat per sos articles a la Mare de Déu d'Esperança y los goigs. In: Estudios sobre el *Cancionero general* (Valencia, 1511) Poesia, manuscrito e imprenta, pp. 479-506, citation on pp. 486 and 487.

¹¹⁹ Joan of Beltraneja was the daughter of the stepfather IV of Castile (1425-1474). She was the daughter of Joan of Portugal (1439-1475). In 1455, The story is as follows:

Henry married Joan of Portugal, sister of Alfonso V of Portugal. After six years of marriage, in 1462, she gave birth to a daughter, Joan, nicknamed "La Beltraneja". Six years after the birth of the throne's heir, part of the nobility of Castile revolted against the king. The rebels claimed that the princess was not the daughter of the king, but actually the daughter of Beltrán de La Cueva, 1st Duke of Albuquerque (thus the nickname "Beltraneja"). This hypothesis was reinforced when the Queen had another two children with the nephew of a Bishop.

However, it should be noted that Isabella of Castile was the aunt of the misnamed Joan of Beltraneja. Isabella was a usurper and must have known that Joan was indeed a natural daughter of Henry IV.

i, en l'atribucion a la reina dels atributs del rei (pom, ceptre y cadira), un homenatge a la reina de castella. Per a garzon, l'afirmacio als escacs d'amor que les reynes tals que.n tot poden y manen evocaria les capitulaciones matrimonials entre isabel de castella i ferran d'arago, que implica per al futur rei d'arago l'obligaco de residir als dominis d'isabel. Si fos aixi, tindriem un nou argument per a situar la datacio dels escacs d'amor cap a 1475, ja que el conflicte civil castella esclata el 1474, arran de la mort d'Enric IV de Castella. Ara be, aquestes hipotesis, que no tenen cap suport documental, son dificilment deduïbles del nostre poema. La reina Isabel I de Castella no sera consort reial a la corona d'arago fins al 1479 i, per tant, dificilment podria ser objecte d'homenatge per part d'algu que no n'era subdit. d'altra part, no estaven vinculats a la cort reial cap dels tres autors, ja que, si be francisc de castellvi ja era, el 1464 cambrer de l'infant ferran d'aragon (el futur ferran II), no n'esdevindra majordom real fins al 1476, i bernat fenollar tampoc sera nomenat capella i mestre de capella de ferran II fins al 1479. En tot cas, cal fer notar que l'augment del poder de la reina coincidix amb els objectius de l'al·legoria amorosa: enfront de la poligamia dels vilantes, les lleys d'amorosa malicia, sentenien una dama per a cada rei. La restriccion de la presencia duplicada de la dama al tauler tindra com a contrapartida l'assimilacio total del seu poder al del rei (Bataller / Narbon¹²⁰ 1991:56).

Translation from Valencian:

Here are some chess scholars who see in the prohibition that the chess queens fight between them an allusion to the conflict between the Catholic Queen Isabella I of Castile and her stepsister Juana the Beltraneja in attribution to the queen the attributes of the King (pom, scepter, and chair), a tribute to the Queen of Spain. For Garzon the assertion of *Scachs d'amor* that the Queens are worth a lot as they can command everything and even send and evoke the capitulations of marriage between Isabella I of Castile and Ferdinand of Aragon implies future obligation of the King of Aragon to reside in Elizabeth's domains. If so, we would have a new argument to place the dating of the check of love on 1475 as the civil conflict in Castile broke out in 1474 following the death of Henry IV of Castile.

¹²⁰ **BATALLER, Alexandre; NARBON, Carme** (1991) Escacs d'amor: una obertura al joc, A Sol Post, 3 (1991), pp. 45-74

However, to these conditions they have no documentary support and are very difficult to deduce from our poem. Queen Isabella I of Castile will not consort the Royal Crown of Aragon until 1479 and therefore could hardly be subject to homage by someone who himself was not citizen. On the other hand she was not linked to any of the three authors of the Royal Court because although Castellvi Francis was in 1464 already the waiter of Prince Ferdinand of Aragon (later Ferdinand II), he did not become real butler until 1476 and Bernard Fenollar would not be named chapel and choirmaster of Ferdinand II until 1479. In any event it should be noted that the increasing power of the queen coincides with the objectives of the allegory of love: against polygamy of the villains the law of love malice, a lady understandable for each king. The restriction of the duplicated presence of the lady on the board will have as counterpart the assimilation of the total power of the king.



Prof. Antoni Ferrano I Francés with José Antonio Garzón Roger, Valencia 2009.

3. Dr. Arie van der Stoep (Holland)

Finally, we have a draughts board game specialist Dr. Arie van der Stoep, who does not believe in Isabella I of Castile. I state here part of his review of Marilyn Yalom's book *Birth of the Chess Queens*¹²¹:

Yalom pays attention to the poem *Scachs d'amor* (The Chess of Love) from the 1470s, the first manuscript referring to the new chess queen. The governing queen was Isabella I of Castile; we make acquaintance with her on p. 199-211. "Can we establish a connection between the new mighty chess queen and Isabella I?", asks Yalom. Her answer is affirmative, based on the argument that Isabella I was a militant queen and that the new chess queen with her unlimited power is militant too. This argument is not new - Yalom borrowed it from Spanish historians¹²². She adopts it to sustain her claim, but is it valid? I am afraid not; for the second time I lodge an objection against the method used by chess historians.

Dr. Van der Stoep finally finishes with the conclusion of the expert: «Hence my conclusion: the book may be fascinating and captivating, though it is far from a contribution to our knowledge of board games.»

The idea of Dr. Van der Stoep is that the word *dame* comes from France and that the new powerful chess queen was developed there. An impressive study of his research can be found on the internet¹²³.

¹²¹ **STOEP, Arie van der** (2014) Birth of the Chess Queen. In: Board Game Studies Journal. Issue 8, pp. 153-158

http://bgsj.ludus-opuscula.org/PDF_Files/10.pdf

¹²² Strangely enough, Yalom did not refer to my articles about Isabella [?] of Castile as the new powerful chess queen.

¹²³ **STOEP, Arie van der** (2014) A chess legend. In: Board Game Studies Journal. Issue 8, pp. 107-122

<http://history.chess.free.fr/papers/van%20der%20Stoep%202014.pdf>



Dr. Arie van der Stoep (Courtesy of <http://dekvd.net>)

The historical background of the new powerful chess queen, Isabella I of Castile

More or less at the same time Professor Joachim Petzold, Dr. Ricardo Calvo, and myself were involved with the history of the modern chess queen:

1986

Professor Joachim Petzold was one of the leading historians in the German Democratic Republic. He spent part of this time on the history of chess and in 1986 mentioned a possible link between dama (chess queen) and the Spanish Queen Isabella I¹²⁴, but in this case the pages are 162 and 163 of this book:

76. Königin Isabella von Kastilien, zu deren Lebzeiten die grosse Schachspielreform stattfand und die als überragende Herrschergestalt auch der modernen Dame im Schach als Vorbild gedient haben könnte. Anonymes Gemälde (16. Jahrhundert).

Translation:

76. Queen Isabella I of Castile, in whose lifetime the great chess reform took place and who as supreme ruler figure could also have served as model in the modern *dame* (lady) in chess.

1987

The chess game at that time reflected the real situation in daily life and from the beginning I could not believe in Jeanne d'Arch, but thought more about Isabella I of Castile¹²⁵

¹²⁴ **PETZOLD, Joachim** (1987) Das königliche Spiel. Die Kulturgeschichte des Schachs, Stuttgart, pp. 162-163

¹²⁵ **WESTERVELD, GOVERT** (1987) Dutch Draughts Magazine "Het Nieuwe Damspel", p. 71

“How was it possible that the dama (queen) suddenly received such a high value in chess and dama?. “We do not know the reason, but we should bear in mind that many Spaniards think of Isabella I as their greatest ruler”. As from 1987 I was looking for proofs for my hypothesis.”

Gerard Bakker¹²⁶ also wrote about the origin of the draughts game and came to the first conclusion with respect to the new powerful queen without mentioning Isabella I of Castile.

1988

I was convinced about the fact that the new powerful Dama in the draughts/checkers and chess game had to do with the Spanish Queen Isabella I of Castille¹²⁷:

Further, it can be of importance that in 1480 the Catholic Kings did ban any each board game involving dice. So people got time for another board game. Because the old chess game with the old (weak) lady took still too much time, the new (strong) lady was introduced to shorten the playing time. And then also the draughts game was born, from the combination of the old alquerque-12 game and the new chess acquired promotion of (pawn) to dama (lady). Why was Isabella I of Castile such an important person? She convinced her husband to provide money to Columbus to discover the New World. She persuaded her husband of the need of one religion, to baptize or expell the Jews and to conquer Granada. This queen was visiting on horse-back her soldiers throughout their territory. It was really more a general¹²⁸ than a Queen and in any case a more important figure than her husband, King Ferdinand.

¹²⁶ **BAKKER, Gerard** (1987) In: *Het Nieuwe Damspel*, N° , pp. 42-50

¹²⁷ **WESTERVELD, Govert** (1988) *Het twaalf-schijven-spel*. In: *Het Nieuwe Damspel*, Utrecht, N° 2 april-June, p. 29.

¹²⁸ Though she certainly could not march onto the battlefield, Isabella I made her presence known, often making camp during the civil war. She appeared before the troops and even rode with them at the start of individual campaigns.

1989

Moreover, seeing that the first draughts book came from Valencia¹²⁹ and the same could be said about the first chess book of Francesc Vicent¹³⁰ it was clear that we had to concentrate on Valencia as the possible birthplace of these two new games.

1990

Professor Juan Torres Fontes of the University of Murcia was one of my loyal supporters. He supplied me various books and articles about Isabella I of Castile, some of which he wrote. The more I read about Isabella I, the more it became clear to me that she was a much more important person than her husband Ferdinand II of Aragon¹³¹.

For that reason I instructed Mr. Jesús Silvente to make a good drawing of Isabella I in front of a Spanish draughts board. This drawing was published in 1990 in my first Spanish draughts book¹³² written with the help of Mrs. Florentina Navarro Belmonte, who was licensed in the Medieval History and in charge of revision of my Spanish texts. The title in the drawing “La Reina de las Damas” (The Queen of the Damas in draughts and chess) does not

¹²⁹ **WESTERVELD, Govert** (1989) Juan de Timoneda. In: *Het Nieuwe Damspel*, Utrecht, Nº 2 april-June, pp. 46-47.

¹³⁰ **VICENT, Francesc** (1495) *Libre dels jochs partits dels schacs en nombre de 100*, Valencia.

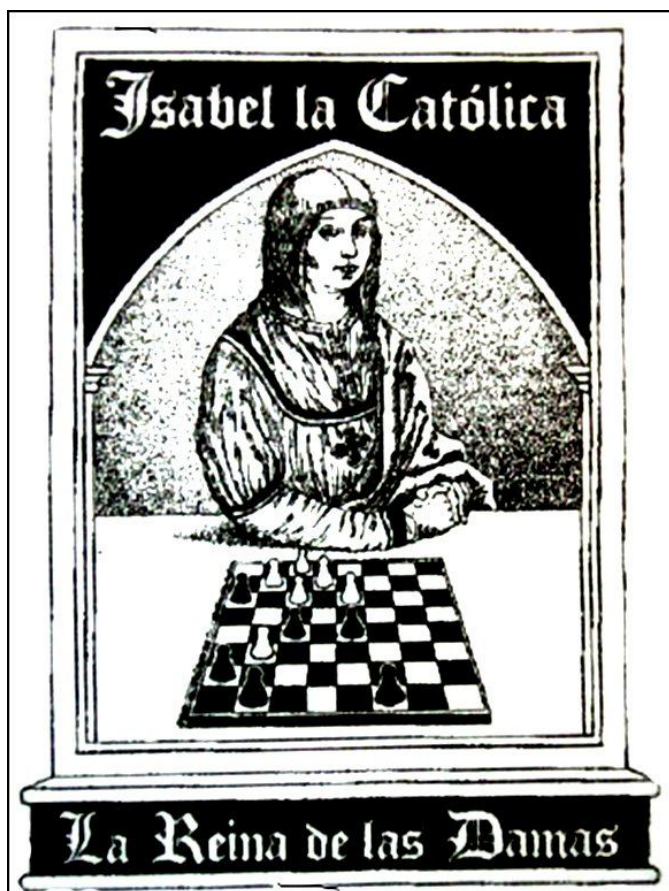
Francesc Vicent (Segorbe, 1450 – c. 1512) was a Valencian, later Spanish, author who wrote the first treatise about chess using the present-day moves for the queen and the bishop. Printed in Valencia on May 15 1495 by Lope de Roca Alemany and Pere Trinchet.

¹³¹ Isabella I of Castile was more important than her husband between the years 1974-1975. Thereafter both Monarchs took together decisions.

¹³² **NAVARRO BELMONTE, Florentina & WESTERVELD, Govert** (1990) *Las Damas: Ciencia sobre un tablero*. Tomo I. Editor Promociones y Publicaciones Universitarias, S.A. (PPU S.A.) – Barcelona. ISBN 84-7665-697-0

create misunderstandings. According to my research she was the woman who was more important than the King and the central figure of the dame in chess and of the dama in the draughts game. As we know in both games we have a dama after entering the pawn in dama.

The two chess books, written in 1495 by Franchesch Vicent in Valencia and in 1497 by Lucena in Salamanca, show that the new chess game was part of the proof of that.



1991

Suddenly something was happening in the chess world too, because Dr. Ricardo Calvo, a renowned chess historian, also dared to state in 1991 the following in one of his explosive articles¹³³:

The new moves of the queen coexist with literary activities in which the feminine figure acquires a new preeminence, as was evident in literary contests honouring the Virgin. At the same time, a powerful queen, Isabella [I] of Castile, was playing a prominent political role esteemed to be at least as important as that of her husband, Ferdinand of Aragon. The decision of changing the rules of movement of the old medieval queen into the new, powerful queen of modern chess, may be explicable in this cultural atmosphere, though this point is, and will remain, a matter of speculation.

But Calvo's idea was only based on intuition as a result of long research and proofs still had to be given. Our friendship dates from 1991 and in 1992 he wrote a short introduction in my second draughts book, from which I only translate part of the text relating to the Queen Isabella I of Castile, because we were both feeling her presence in the chess and draughts games¹³⁴.

The origins of the game of checkers (draughts) and its fascinating historical and cultural context are still partially a world shaded by veils of mystery. Some of these veils hint at yet a very specific backdrop: The second half of the fifteenth century and the figure of Queen as Isabella I of Castile, both on the chessboard and in politics, printed a deep mark that has served as a mold to different ideas engendered in her environment. The game consists of jumping over squares and lines on a board or limits of human geography hitherto regarded as fixed. It is

¹³³ **CALVO, Ricardo** (1991) France, Birthplace of Modern Chess. In: *New in chess*, Nº 7, pp. 82-87 and 89

¹³⁴ **WESTERVELD, Govert** (1992) *Las Damas: Ciencia sobre un tablero*. Tomo II, Beniel, p. 7.

almost immaterial, both mounted. In the spirit of that time there existed an endless transformative potential at the edges of the explored things, a way of no turning back leading to the promotion of each human or symbolic piece who dared to take the edge of the frame of established moves.

As indicated before in the early nineties I became friends with Dr. Ricardo Calvo who visited my home several times. When I was invited by him in 1993 to assist in the Chess Congress of the Königstein Gruppe in the Max Euwe Centre of Amsterdam, it quickly became clear to me that I was among the best chess historians in the world.



On the Chinese rice table with Ricardo Calvo and our respective spouses

I brought to Amsterdam the hypothesis of the new powerful dama in the chess and draughts game and it was Prof. Dr. Bauer who invited me to write about it for one of his books. In this way my hypothesis was published a year later¹³⁵.

¹³⁵ **WESTERVELD, Govert** (1994) Historia de la nueva dama poderosa en el juego de Ajedrez y Damas. (History of the New Powerful Queen in the Game of Chess and Draughts), pages 103-225.

Prof. Dr. Joachim Petzold from Berlin, whom I met in Amsterdam, encouraged me in 1994 to continue my investigations, because according to him Dr. Ricardo Calvo or myself would clarify the situation of the new powerful dama¹³⁶. In 1997 I published the history of the new powerful dama¹³⁷. I placed the English introduction of the book on the internet¹³⁸ within a year. For all those years Rob Jansen from Amsterdam had helped me with valuable information about the history of draughts.

Homo Ludens: Der spielende Mensch IV, Internationale Beiträge des Institutes für Spielforschung und Spielpädagogik an der Hochschule "Mozarteum" - Salzburg. Herausgegeben von Prof. Mag. Dr. Günther C. Bauer.

¹³⁶ After the publication of my hypothesis of Isabel la Católica in 1994 Prof. Petzold wrote me a letter on 11 August 1994, from which partial English translation follows:

Dear Mr. Westerveld,

Already in Amsterdam I had the feeling that from your work the chess history research will receive impulses. Although I can read your article in Homo Ludens Volume 4 only in the summary of Mr. Pöll, I see myself (my work) fully confirmed. Calvo and you will most likely solve the mystery of when and where the chess reform was held and who could have invented the name "the Dame".....See Appendix I

¹³⁷ **WESTERVELD, Govert** (1997) La influencia de la reina Isabel la Católica sobre la nueva dama poderosa en el origen del juego de las damas y el ajedrez moderno". ISBN 84-605-6372-3 - 329 pages. – Forewords of Dr. Ricardo Calvo and Prof. Dr. Juan Torres Fontes – University of Murcia (In the Dutch language)

¹³⁸ See Index I at the end of this book



Marilyn Yalom (Chronicle / Chris Stewart)

Following the publication of my book «*La reina Isabel la Católica: su reflejo en la dama poderosa de Valencia, cuna del ajedrez moderno y origen del juego de damas*, Generalidad Valenciana. Consellería de Cultura, Educació i Esport», at the beginning of 2004 on which José Antonio Garzon Roger collaborated with me I learned that the professor of the University of Stanford Marilyn Yalom¹³⁹

¹³⁹ **YALOM, Marilyn** (2004) *Birth of the Chess Queen*. London, Pandora Press, 2004 On 23 October Certainly, Isabel is a far more likely candidate for this distinction than the historically remote Joan of Arc (1412?-1431) or the geographically displaced Catherine Sforza (1463-1509) proposed by Eales. Although there is no proof that Isabel's real and symbolic power caused the transformation in the game itself, we can say that at the very least the recording of that dramatic change was a result of the impresssion that the absolutist power of this "new kind of queen" made on one aspiring *letrado*.

2004 she informed me by phone that she had seen my book of 1997 that was in the National Library of The Hague. I received an email from her with the following text:

«Yes, I am familiar with your work and cite it in my book. We agree (as did that great pioneer Ricardo Calvo) that Isabella I of Castile was deeply implicated in the establishment of the new long-legged chess queen and, as you point out, in the game of draughts. It was a labor of love for me to research and write *Birth of the Chess Queen* - a project that brought me to the Royal Library in the Hague, to the Cleveland

supported my idea of a lifetime since 1987 that the Queen (Dama/Lady) of the chess game and Dama (Lady) in the draughts game modeled Isabella I of Castile chess game and Dama (Lady) in the draughts game modeled Isabella I of Castile and, more importantly, the evidence is found in Ms *Sachs d'amor*¹⁴⁰.

José Antonio Garzón Roger had according to my instructions¹⁴¹ found in *Scachs d'amor* the proofs that Isabella I of Castile was the new powerful queen in the chess game.

The opinion of Barbara Weissberger about the new queen in chess is also very clear when she refers to Isabella I of Castile¹⁴²:

Public Library on several occasions, and to Spain (Madrid and Catalonia).»

¹⁴⁰ **VINYOLES, NARCÍS** (1475?) *Escacs d'amor*, Valencia; Edición de Antonio Ferrando Francés, Universitat de València, Facultat de Filologia, Narcís Vinyoles i la seua obra, Valencia, 1978.

CALVO, Ricardo (1999) *El poema Scachs d'amor*. (Siglo XV). Análisis y comentarios por Ricardo Calvo.

GARZÓN ROGER, José Antonio (2001) *En pos del incunable perdido Francesch Vicent: Llibre dels jochs partitis dels schachs*, Valencia, 1495.

¹⁴¹ **WESTERVELD, Govert** (2004) *La reina Isabel la Católica: su reflejo en la dama poderosa de Valencia, cuna del ajedrez moderno y origen del juego de damas*. In colaboración con José Antonio Garzón Roger. Generalidad Valenciana. Conselleria de Cultura, Educació i Esport, Valencia, p. 42. Garzon states in his Epilogue: "Without Westerveld I would never have revised the manuscript *Scachs d'amor*, and it was he who gave me the new eyes to look at it. This has allowed us to precisely date not only the manuscript, but also the actual origin of modern chess (1475-1476)".

¹⁴² **WEISSBERGER, Barbara** (2004) *Isabel Rules. Constructing Queenship Wielding Power*. University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, London, p. 153.



**Barbar Weissberger. Award presented by George D. Greenia,
Editor, *La corónica* 41st
International Congress on Medieval Studies, Western Michigan
University, May 6, 2006**

After 2004 it was clear to me that I had to investigate the life of Lucena, but unfortunately that was a very difficult job, because we did not know anything about him. We know that in 1497 he wrote the two books *Repetición de amores* and *Arte de Ajedrez* which were published in Salamanca. Another book that he probably also wrote in 1497 was *Tractado sobre la muerte de Don Diego de Azevedo*. However, after this date Lucena disappeared completely. For that reason I decided to firstly publish the biography of his father, the ambassador of the Catholic Monarchs Juan Ramirez de Lucena, and then the work of his son Lucena.



**José Antonio Garzón Roger, Professor Ángel Alcalá, and the author
(Valencia, 2006)**

For that purpose I had to study many dissertations, books, and articles on the life of the Lucena family. It became clear to me that the university was a closed circle. Nobody at the university was aware of the great research about the protonotary Juan Ramírez de Lucena done by Máximo Diago who worked in the Centro de Ciencias Humanas y Sociales. One of the earliest researchers of Juan Ramírez de Lucena was Professor Dr. Ángel Alcalá in New York. In 2006 I finished my biography in Spanish of this protonotary and Professor Alcalá was kind to write its foreword.

In the meantime José Antonio Garzón Roger had written in 2005 another book on Francesch Vicent showing that the Italian manuscripts of Cesena and Perugia had the full text of the chess book published in Valencia in 1495. Little by little it was accepted in the chess world that Isabella I of Castile was the new powerful chess queen on the chess board.



The author and Jerónimo Miguel Briongos in 2011

On the other hand I learned that Jerónimo Miguel Briongos of Barcelona was working on a dissertation about *Vita Beata* of Juan Ramírez de Lucena. Being sure that Jerónimo Miguel Briongos would prepare a precious dissertation about Juan Ramírez de Lucena I did not waste any attempt to convince him that the world was waiting for it. We had several meetings in Barcelona in various years to discuss the papers of the protonotary. One of his most exiting discoveries was that Juan Ramírez de Lucena was working with Prince Ferdinand in Aragon before Ferdinand married Isabella I of Castile in 1469.

Why the Castilian court had more influence than the Aragonian court

Nobody understands how it was possible that suddenly the influence of the kingdom of Castile was more important

than the kingdom of Aragon. However, this was promoted by the same King John II of Aragon and his court. In the early fifteenth century the Castilian dynasty of Trastámara had begun with Ferdinand I of Trastámara in 1412 in the Crown of Aragon through which the Castilian language gradually became the language of the court, the Aragonian nobility, and the upper classes¹⁴³.

Although we do not know the author of the *Triste deleytación*, its origin seems to be Catalan according to the researchers. The preference for the Castilian language - even when some authors cite other geographic origins - seems to attest to the existence of a shared linguistic paradigm, but ultimately it is a consequence of the expansion of Castile and its cultural prestige from the marriage of the Catholic Monarchs. In our view this is not enough to postulate the sentimental fiction as a genre, although it seems to be an attitude that shows that these writers felt immersed in the same cultural environment¹⁴⁴.

The fact that his successors, i.e. all the monarchs of the dynasty, married Castilian nobles strengthened the presence of the Castilian language. The new dynasty by origin would change the political orientation of Aragonian life. For the same formal reason, without diminishing its status, the Kingdom bowed before eastward will now after swinging go back to the west¹⁴⁵. Thus we see that in 1430 the Truce

¹⁴³ **COUTADO DOMÉNECH, Esperanza** (2008) La complejidad de las actitudes lingüísticas hacia las lenguas minoritarias. E caso del valle de Benasque. Tesis doctoral, Universidad de Zaragoza, p. 148.

¹⁴⁴ **GARCÍA RODRÍGUEZ, Rocío I.** (2012) La elipsis gramatical en la ficción sentimental. Tesis doctoral dirigida por la Dra. Dña. Inés Carrasco Cantos. Departamento de Filología Española I y Filología Románica. Universidad de Málaga, p. 61

¹⁴⁵ **GONZÁLEZ OLLÉ, Fernando** (2010) Actitudes lingüísticas de los Reyes de Aragón. En: Baxar para subir. Colección de estudios en memoria de Tomás Buesa Oliver, pp. 85-110

of Majano (Soria), arranged by the kings of Aragon, Navarra and Castile consist written in Castilian¹⁴⁶.

Castilian was the usual language of Alfonso V (married to the Trastámara Queen Mary) and his Neapolitan court was mostly Castilian¹⁴⁷. It is clear that the everyday family language among Aragonian Trastámaras was Castilian. The great power of Castile and the decline of the Crown of Aragon explain the markedly Castilian character of modern Spain. Both King Juan II and his son Prince Ferdinand II of Aragon spoke Castilian, since everyday family language among the Aragonian Trastámaras was Castilian¹⁴⁸. The linguistic behavior of the sovereigns throughout the court circles would extend or increase. After the marriage of Isabella I of Castile to Ferdinand II of Aragon some of the Aragonian courtiers were immersed in the early acceptance of Castilian customs. This is something that we have to bear in mind.

An article in the newspaper *Levante-emv.com* broadly describes the change of the Valencian language to the Castilian one. The date was 1510. A Valencian writer explicitly abjures from Catalan, which he considers "*a barbaric language*". The traitor is Narcís Vinyoles. However, as a good servant of King Fernando the traitor Narcís Vinyoles had long before accepted in Valencian language the superiority of Castile, which we see reflected, strange enough, on the chessboard with the introduction of the new powerful lady [dama]. Castile's superiority was in

¹⁴⁶ **GUAL CAMARENA, M.** (1951) Treguas de Majano entre Aragón, Navarra y Castilla. In: CHE, 16, pp. 78-109

¹⁴⁷ **CROCE, B.** (1968) La Spagna nella vita italiana durante la Rinascenza, Bari Laterza, p. 36.

¹⁴⁸ **GONZÁLEZ OLLÉ, Fernando** (2010) Actitudes lingüísticas de los Reyes de Aragón. En: Baxar para subir. Colectánea de estudios en memoria de Tomás Buesa Oliver, pp. 85-110

the atmosphere in the fifteenth century, even the King John II wanted to see his son Ferdinand I married to the future Queen of Castile.



Narcis Vinyoles

The abbreviated *Levante-emv.com* newspaper story says¹⁴⁹:

As argues the Professor of Catalan Philology of the University of Valencia and academician of the AVL Antoni Ferrando¹⁵⁰, "deep

¹⁴⁹ 500 años de desprecio al valenciano. En: Levante-emv.com, 3 de agosto de 2010

<http://www.levante-emv.com/comunitat-valenciana/2010/08/03/500-anos-desprecio-valenciano/728102.html>

¹⁵⁰ **FERRANDO FRANCÉS, Antoni** (1985) Presente y futuro de la normalización lingüística en el País Valenciano. En: Revista de Filología Románica, vol. III-1985. Editorial de la Universidad Complutense de Madrid, pp. 35-45

inferiority complex takes over the Catalan speakers against an imperial Castilian language, now considered an elegant and refined language par excellence". It is the time of change of language, the linguistic transvestism. The first verses in Castilian created in Valencia arrive in the last third of the fifteenth century timid and snobbish. But it is in 1510 when the turning point of sociolinguistics inversion occurs. And it comes from the hand of the Valencian poet Narcís Vinyoles. Firstly because Vinyoles chose translating the Latin work *Supplementum chronicarum*, a commission of Baron of Toga, Lluís Carròs, and Baron of Manises Pere Boïl into Castilian, not into Valencian as was the habit. Secondly and more importantly, by the justification Narcís Vinyoles gives in his prologue to the work. "More out of desire to serve and please many than out of presumptuous boldness I dared to lend my fearful hand - he says - to put this work into this clean, elegant, and graceful Castilian Spanish that may without lies and flattery among many barbars and savages from our Spain be called Latin, sonorous, and most elegant.

.....

Who was this poet who for many has passed into history as the first traitor to the Valencian country and language? Besides being a poet Narcís Vinyoles was a five-times councilor of the city of Valencia, four times a jurat, and four times an administrator of the Llotja Nova. He was nominated twice for mostassa and twice for the post of civil justice. He reached the post of accountant of the Generalitat and was recommended by Ferdinand II of Aragon for being elected as Criminal Justice of Valencia. He was loyal to King Ferdinand II of Aragon (Ferdinand the Catholic), collaborator of the court of the Inquisition in Valencia and, as Mary Carmen Romeo says, "faithful server to the royal policy of centralization". Therefore, and as some experts cite, the filocastellano speech of Vinyoles could be a tactic to ingratiate himself with the royal Spanish power. Antoni Ferrando, author of *Narcís Vinyoles i seva obra*, believes that the poet's words are "a great praise to the Castilian language, that's obvious, or even the expression of a complex or profound admiration, but no automatic hatred towards the language that he used after 1510 for writing some poems."

From this text and the texts of *Scachs d'amor* it becomes clear that the traitor Narcís Vinyoles was already a traitor in the early stages by fully accepting the Castilian manners and habits in the court of King Ferdinand II of Aragon,

immediately after the marriage of King Ferdinand II of Aragon to Isabella I of Castile.

Once the Kingdom of Aragon merged with the Kingdom of Castile, King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella formally enjoined a single-minded effort to create a new unitary state in which linguistic and other differences would become undesirable.

The name and movement of the word Dama

The term “Dama” (French: Dame) was already used in Spain before 1255 and refers to an important woman, the mother of Jesus Christ. While human beings remain within the parameters of service to God and his mother, their salvations – entrance into the Kingdom of heaven – are assured: This is our Sire and that is our Dame (*Esti es nuestro Sire e ésta Nuestra Dama*)¹⁵¹.

Disso el omne bonno a los de la aljama:
«Esti es nuestro Sire e ésta nuestra Dama;
Siempre es bien apreso qui a ellos se clama
Qui en ellos no cree bevrá fuego e flama».

This poem was written by Gonzalo de Berceo (ca. 1197 – before 1264). He was a Castilian poet born in the Riojan village of Berceo, close to the major Benedictine monastery of San Millán de la Cogolla. He is celebrated for his poems on religious subjects written in a style of verse which has been called *Mester de Clerecía*, shared with more secular productions such as *Libro de Alexandre*, or *Libro de Apolonio*. He is considered the first Castilian poet known by name.

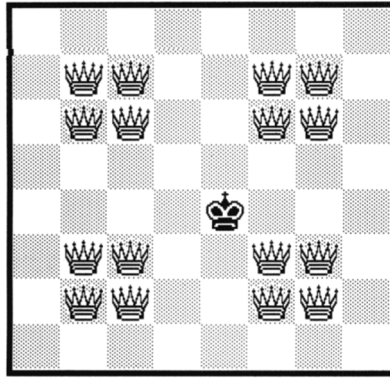
¹⁵¹ **BERCEO, Gonzalo de** (1255) *Los milagros de nuestra señora*

For the word *dame* in the sense of chess queen we have to go to France. We should not forget the MS King's, 13, A. XVIII (K), written in Anglo-French, which contains a number of treatises from the 13th and 14th centuries. Murray states:



Notre Dame dedicated to the Virgin Mary, Mother of God

The King's Library MS. is a quarto parchment MS. which contains a number of different treatises in different hands of the 13th and 14th centuries. The chess work follows a short treatise upon the game of tables (ff. 157 b-160a), and is entitled *Ici comencent les iupertiez des eschez*. It occupies ff. 161-73 (old foliation 166-9, 190-8, but there is nothing wanting). Both works are in the same hand, of the last quarter of the 13th century, as a short chronicle of England down to the reign of Henry III (1216-72). The chess work is written in Anglo-French (without trace of any English words), and forms a poem of 1,843 lines divided into an introduction and 55 sections, each numbered with an Arabic numeral.



Civis Bononiae 249

In this MS there is a game of playing chess with dames that is called Le Guy de Dames¹⁵²:

Le Guy de Dames (Civis Bononiae 249)

Après les guys de chualer. De guy de **dames** volie parler. E pur ceo ke ou dames est la medlé. Le guy de **dames** si est nommé. Tiel es de ceo guy le couenaunt. Ke .xvi. fierces auera le vn iuaunt. L'autre soun rey soulement auera. E en quel poynt qe ly plect si saudra. Si noun par force rolle luy seyt. E a dreyn par force mate sereyt. Primes deyt il soun rey asscer. La v il vaudra en le eschecker. E en la manere cum cy veyes. Les fierces si asseyeres. E à checun tret eschec dires. E à dreyn par force li materes. Par vn soul poynt ne remeyndra. V le rey reposa porra. Mes à primes del couenaunt fet soyt. Ke nul fierce pris iseyt (67-86).

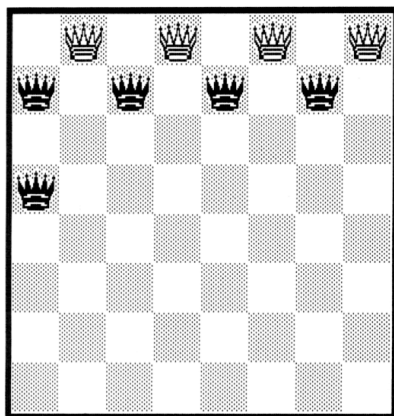
White mates the solitary King (who can play to any square) by placing 16 fidedated Qs on the board¹⁵³.

There is a Latin work (collected in Lombardy in the medieval period) known as **Bonus Socius**. The handwriting

¹⁵² MURRAY, Harold James Ruthven (1913) The History of Chess, Oxford, pp. 581-589

¹⁵³ MURRAY, Harold James Ruthven (1913). The History of Chess, Oxford, p. 674

dates from the 14th century and has a chess position with five black against four white queens (Bonus Socios 185). This manuscript should have reached early France already in the 14th century, because they know at least 7 handwritings of French origin. It may be concluded from the text that the word **dama** is used to signify an important woman. The same position occurs in the chess manuscript **Civis Bononiae** under number 247.



Bonus Socios 185

One of the French translations of the Bonus Socios is the MS. Nat. Lib. Paris, F. fr. 1173 of the 14th century with text in the Picard or Walloon dialect of French that consists of 216 folio leaves¹⁵⁴. Antonius van der Linde¹⁵⁵ gives a text that figures on folio 3 of the manuscript with the word **dama**, but he erroneously considered the word **daïue** to be dama. This was rectified by the great Murray¹⁵⁶.

¹⁵⁴ **MURRAY, Harold James Ruthven** (1913) *The History of Chess*, Oxford, pp. 620, 621, 674 and 701

¹⁵⁵ **LINDE, Antonio van der** (1874) *Geschichte und Literatur des Schachspiels*. Zwei Bände in einem Band. Editions Olms of 1981, Zürich, p. 286

¹⁵⁶ **MURRAY, Harold James Ruthven** (1913) *The History of Chess*, Oxford, p. 490

Nevertheless the same manuscript bears the word **dama**, but in the sense ‘important woman’:

Folio 2

On dist es proverbes anciens ke mal est science emploiee en cuer auariscieus du monstrar. Car chascuns ki mix set se doit traueillier a chou ke il puist les autres enseignier. Et pour chou ke ie ne vauroie iestre repris de si vilain pechiez comme dauarise. Jou Nicholes de St. Nicholai clers a laude de chelui ki est fontaine de sapience vous. Vueu enseigner et demonstrier une partie du sentement de mon cuer et especiaument sor li gieu des eskies et premiers coument par cui ne en quel lieu il fu trouues premierement. En apres de la maniere du gieu et des assises et comment il puet iestre abregies par partures. Sachiez kil fu trouues an siege de troie la grant par .i. ch’r sage et hardi et par une **dame** la quele estoit sa chiere amee car li ch’rs et la **dame** se seoient en .i. vergi et dehors les murs de la cite et regardoient comment chil de dehors requeroient chiaus de dedans et comment cil de dedans les recheuoient et se deffendoient uiguerusement et comment il prenoient et desconfisoient li vn les autres et li plus grant les plus petis, et li plus fort les plus febles et comparerent leur gieu selonc l’ordenement ke il auoient veu es assaus et es batailles. Et apres che ke la cite fu destruite li ch’rs et la **dame** repairierent en lor paiis. Con apiele lombardie. Et fu li gieus espandus par tout le paiis de coi vous faites et veoir le poes aparetment ke lombart sont li plus sage et li plus sutil de cel gieu ki soient. Si ke por le souillece de cel gieu le doiuent desirer a sauoir toute gentil gent et doiuent metre diligamment lor estude et especiaument amant par amors car damour damant et **dame** vint il premierement. Mais pour chou ke li humaine conditions est oscurchie en l’offisse de le celle memoratiue par l’empechement de nostre premier pere si ke le pert legierement chou ke le ne voit ou pense assidueement. Jou Nicholes deuant dis demourans en lombardie a le priere et a le requeste de mes compaignons ai compilet che liure de partures ke iai escrito par men estude dou gieu des eskies et des taules et des merelles. Et por chou ke nule choes ne puet iestre parfaite je depri a mes segneurs mes amis et mes compaignons as quels chis presens liures sera parvenus sour imperfection de ceste oeuvre ke il le ueuillent deboinairement rechevoir et corriger saucune chose iest trouuee ki ait mestier de correction.

Sir Ferumbras

Murray erroneously states that the earliest mention of the draughts game (Jeu de dames) dates from the second half of the 14th century (Sir Ferumbras of c. 1380). Here is part of the poem of Sir Ferumbras¹⁵⁷:

“þe manere of hem,” þan sayde he “is erly gon to cherche,
& after-ward ech man on his degree after his stat þay werche.
þo þat lordes buþ of þe lond in som tyme of the 3ere,
þay takeþ hure facouns faire an hond & fareþ to ryuere;
& Summe a deer hontep of hem þar went & some to fox and
hare;
& to ioustes and tornymment wel mo þer wendeþ ofte þare.
þo þat willieþ to leue at hame pleyep to þe eschekkere,
& summe of hem to iew-de-**dame** & summe to tablere:
Summe þay vseþ a maner of play to caste wel a spere;
And somme for to skyrme asay with swerd & bokelere.
þys buþ þe games of my contre þat y þe telle here.”

However, this is not a draughts game, but a game wherein several damas were used.

Guillaume de Saint André (c. 1320 – c. 1390)

Murray states erroneously that there is a French manuscript of a metrical version of 1200 lines written by Guillaume de Saint André in the 15th century¹⁵⁸. It talks about the chess game and the moves are described in 42 lines (139-180). The king's leap and the double step of the pawn are stated; the Queen is only given her Muslim move. The pieces are

¹⁵⁷ MURRAY, Harold James Ruthven (1913) The History of Chess, Oxford, p. 429

¹⁵⁸ MURRAY, Harold James Ruthven (1913) The History of Chess, Oxford, p. 546

called *roy, roigne, or dame, daufflin, chevalier, and paonnet, pion, paont, or paon*. According to Murray the initial letters of the last 22 lines, when read in the reverse order, give the author's name.

However, Murray does not give the name of the French manuscript; it is known as *Le jeu des échecs moralisé*¹⁵⁹. The apostolic notary Guillaume de Saint André was as secretary in service of Juan IV, the duke of Brittany. He wrote this chess poem between 1381 and 1385 and in this poem the word "dame" is used as chess queen. Consequently this poem is not from the 15th century as stated by Murray, but from the 14th century.

- 135 Or mettez doncq voustre pouair
Savoir comment on doitb jouer
-. Si fero y ge certainement,
Car ge en ay moult grant tallant !
-. Voyez cy doncq en l'eschiquier
140 Le tret du roy qui es moult fier
Du premier point doux poins sauldra
Mais que les poins ne soient gardez
De mille gens, ne occupez;
145 Et que ce coup rien il ne prenge,
Le sault en est moult bien estrange !
La **dame** si en peult autant faire;
Mais que la place ne soit contraire;
Et si peult alller davant soy,
150 Ou de cornier, tresbien le scoy !
Le roy peult bien partout aller,
En blanca, en noir, par le tablier,
Mes si la **dame** se siet en blanc,
Elle tendrá touz diz son ranc.
151 L'auffin qui est en noir assis
Au tiers point sauldra par avis.
Il n mura j asa color,
Non será le blanc par nul jour.

¹⁵⁹ CAUNEAU, Jean-Michel & PHILIPPE, Dominique (1996) *Le jeu des échecs moralisés de Guillaume de Saint-André*. In: *Annales de Bretagne et des pays de l'Ouest*. Tome 103, number 1, pp. 7-65

- Ainczoys vont touz dous de corniere
 160 Qui veult bien savoir la maniere.
 Le chevalier change pour voir,
 Quar moult bien sault du blanc en noir.
 Ou tiers point touz dis s'asserra
 Et, s'il vault, il retournera.
 165 Les deux rocs si courent partout,
 De long de travers et de bout,
 Et, si vont de long et de lé,
 Rien en leur voie n'est espargné.
 Mes ils ne vont point de corniere,
 170 Combien qu'ilz retournent arriere.
 Au premier coup, le paonnet
 Davont soy en un poins se vet;
 Mais il ne prent fors de corniere,
 Ne ne peut retourner arriere.
 175 Tant qu'il ait au bout a esté
 Lors est il en sa majesté;
 Quar il a auxi grant noblesse
 Comme la royne, par sa prouesse.
 Et si peut aller et venir
 180 Par l'eschiquier, a son plair.

The Spanish *alferza* was a feminine noun in chess and it was changed by the new powerful *dama* (chess queen) in Spain only in the 15th century, while the name of the weak *dame* (chess queen) in France was centuries earlier.

It will be clear to the experts of the chess game that the piece with the word *dama*, originating in Valencia, is coming from France and that this piece representing the chess queen suddenly gained more power. Consequently we have to explain why people in Valencia suddenly chose the name *dama* and why they increased the power of the piece. This will be explained in a future article¹⁶⁰.

¹⁶⁰ WESTERVELD, Govert (2015). Isabella I of Castile as the Virgin Mary on the Chess Board.

Conclusion

Cesolis' chess books inform us that the figures on the chess board are a mirror of the daily life¹⁶¹. Stanza 54 of *Scachs d'amor* states that the queen (dama) in the new game had received the sword, the scepter, and the throne. This only happened to Isabella I of Castile in Spain in the XV century. She became the new powerful queen on the chess board with a long move. Dr. Arie van der Stoep had proved with his doctoral dissertation that the Spanish word "dama" originally came from France, where the word is "dame". In France we only had a weak queen with a short move. Isabella I of Castile became the leading figure in Spain and Castilian habits and language were quickly accepted by the Aragonese courtiers who wanted to serve his King. Castile's superiority was in the atmosphere and according to Prof. Antoni Ferrando there was a deep inferiority complex of the Catalan speakers against the imperial Castilian language. As we know, Narcís Vinyoles was one of the three poets who wrote the poem *Scachs d'amor* in 1475. However, one of the first traitors to the Valencian region and language in 1510 was the poet Narcís Vinyoles. If this is true, then he also was one of the first traitors to the Valencian region in 1475 and was thus in line with his behavior.

¹⁶¹ The symbolizing of the game of chess was intended to relate the nature and movement of its pieces with the different classes of society, their role and their duties.

CHAPTER IV.

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Appendix I

Prof. Dr. JOACHIM PETZOLD

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11. August 1994

Sehr geehrter Herr Westerveld,
schon im Amsterdam hatte ich das Gefühl, daß von Ihrer Arbeit die Schachgeschichtsforschung Impulse bekommen wird. Obwohl ich Ihren Beitrag in Homo Ludens Band 4 nur in der Zusammenfassung von Herrn Pöhl lesen kann, sehe ich mich vollauf bestätigt. Sie und Calvo werden uns am ehesten das Gemeinmis lüften, wann und wo die Schachreform stattfand und wer den Namen Dame erfunden haben könnte. Wenn Valencia gleichermaßen die Geburtsstadt des neuen Schachs und des eigentlichen Damespiels wäre, dann würde sich mein Blick auf den Druckereibesitzer Dr. Miguel Albert richten, der sich 1474 um den Preis für ein Loblied auf die Jungfrau Maria bewarb und der vielleicht auch das verschollene Buch von Vicent herausbrachte. Laßt sich von ihm im Stadtarchiv noch etwas ermitteln?

Übrigens ist Lucena wirklich so schlecht auf die Frauen zu sprechen, wie man Barbara Matulkas Dissertation entnehmen muß? Was hätte er dann wohl mit einer derartigen Hochzeitgabe bezweckt? Käme man noch an Hinterlassenschaften der Lucenas heran? Wenn ich Ihnen von Berlin aus irgendwie behilflich sein könnte, würde ich es gern tun, Aber der Haebler (Geschichte der spanischen Frühdrucke) steht sicher in jeder größeren spanischen Bibliothek.

Da ich Ihre Adresse nicht habe, muß ich leider Frau Magister Eibl um die Weiterleitung dieses Briefes bitten. Sie kommen doch hoffentlich zum Workshop "Vom Wesir zur Dame" im November nach Wien? Näheres können Sie auch von Frau Magister Eibl erfahren.

Mit freundlichen Grüßen Ihr

Joachim Petzold

Appendix II

Joachim Petzold Juli 1994

Beitrag zum Wiener Workshop vom 3. bis 5. November 1994
zum Thema "Vom Wesir zur Dame"

Wie erklärt sich der Name Dame im Schach?

Es ist noch immer nicht endgültig geklärt, warum bei der grossen Schachspielreform in der zweiten Hälfte des 15. Jahrhunderts die Schachkönigin den Namen Dame erhielt. Dass zumindest kurzzeitig zwei Bezeichnungen für die dem persisch-arabischen Fers (Wesir) entsprechende Regina im, alten und ihrer so brettbeherrschenden Nachfolgerin im neuen Spiel notwendig wurden, liegt auf der Hand. Erst als die neue Spielweise sich vollständig durchgesetzt hatte, konnten die unterschiedlichen Bezeichnungen zum Synonympaar Königin/Dame verschmelzen oder ohne die Gefahr einer Verwechslung der traditionelle Begriff Königin oder Queen wieder allein verwandt werden. Die Spanier blieben bei Dama und die Italiener bei Donna. Auch die Franzosen bevorzugten Dame. Die sprachliche Assymetrie zu König (Rey, Re, Roi) wurde in Kauf genommen. Wenn sicher wäre, dass das Damespiel zu dieser Zeit auch begrifflich voll ausgebildet gewesen ist, liesse sich eine recht profane Ableitung vom Damestein vermuten. Doch es scheint eher umgekehrt gewesen zu sein¹⁶². Obwohl das Damespiel schon im 12. Jahrhundert fassbar wird, befand es sich in Abhängigkeit vom Schachspiel. Dafür spricht die Bezeichnung Fers für den Spielstein, der sich im 16. Jahrhundert analog und folgerichtig in Dame wandelte.

Schon Gustavus Selenus (Herzog August der Jüngere von Braunschweig-Lüneburg) zeigte sich in seinem 1616 in Leipzig erschienenen Schachbuch höchst verwundert, dass die

¹⁶² Arie van der Stoep: A History of Draughts, Rockanje 1984.

mächtigsten Schachfiguren Frauen waren. Er meinte, dass der Spielerfinder dabei vielleicht an die Amazonen gedacht habe¹⁶³.

Günther Wahl, der die Forschungsergebnisse von Thomas Hyde im deutschen Sprachbereich bekannt machte, ohne allerdings die Quelle, aus der er schöpfte, genau genug anzugeben, wollte die Bezeichnung Königin oder Dame gänzlich aus dem Schachbereich verbannt wissen, weil sie "dem Geist der Sitten des Orients, dem Kostüm von ganz Asien geradezu entgegen ist." Die Figur an der linken Seite des Königs sei männlichen Geschlechts. Wenn man sie in Europa in eine Frau umgedeutet habe, dann aus reinen Galanteriegründen.

Wahl schrieb diesen "unschicklichen" Vorgang der Schmeichelei" französischer Ritter gegenüber Frauen, also letztendlich dem Minnesang zu, die "nach und nach allgemeinen Beifall" gefunden habe¹⁶⁴. Der grosse Schachhistoriker und Schachbibliograph Antonius van der Linde bestritt zunächst sogar, dass das Wort Dame im Schach mit einer Frau überhaupt etwas zu tun habe.

Er meinte zu Recht, dass es sich um eine Steigerung gegenüber der Königin handeln musste, konnte diese jedoch im Dame-Begriff nicht erkennen. Zu seinen Versuch, Dame mit einen von Intellekt geschleuderten Stein aus dem Griechischem zu übersetzen, bemerkte er aber schon ahnungsvoll: "Vielleicht ... erzähle ich bloß exegetische Irrtümer¹⁶⁵."

Der Schachhistoriker Jacob Silbermann war der erste, der eine plausible Erklärung dafür fand, dass sich in der Bezeichnung Dame ein Qualitätssprung gegenüber der Ehefrau eines Königs auf dem Schachbrett verbarg. Er verwies auf die Jungfrau von Orleans, die von den Franzosen zwar nicht als Königin, wohl

¹⁶³ Gustavus Selenus: Das Schach- oder König-Spiel, Leipzig 1616, S. 59

¹⁶⁴ S. F. Günter Wahl: Der Geist und die Geschichte des Schach-Spiels bei den Indern, Persern, Arabern, Türken, Sinesen und übrigen Morgenländern, den Indern, Persern, Arabern, Türken, Sinesen und übrigen Morgenländern, Deutschen und andern Europäern, Halle 1798 (Reprint Leipzig 1981, S. 162f.)

¹⁶⁵ Antonius van der Linde: Geschichte und Litteratur des Schachspiels, Berlin 1874, Volume. I, S. 321 f.

aber als Dame angesprochen werden konnte und die den französischen König zum Sieg über die Engländer führte. Ihr zu Ehren wäre die Namensgebung der übermächtig gewordenen neuen Königin im Schach erfolgt¹⁶⁶. Doch die Jeanne d'Arc wurde 1431 als Hexe verbrannt. Wie hatte sie da zum Vorbild der Schach-Dame werden können?

Der Verfasser vertritt seit 1981 die Meinung, dass die Bezeichnung Dame im Schach von Notre Dame, der Gottesmutter, abgeleitet sein könnte¹⁶⁷. Er hat diese Vermutung in seiner Kulturgeschichte des Schachspiels näher begründet¹⁶⁸. Diesem Deutungsversuch wird mit Skepsis begegnet, so vor allem von Hans Holländer¹⁶⁹, aber auch von Egbert Meissenburg und Kenneth Whyld, weil es vielen unvorstellbar erscheint, dass eine Schachfigur ihren Namen von der Jungfrau Maria erhielt. Nur Josef Seifert hat diese Deutungsmöglichkeit uneingeschränkt anerkannt¹⁷⁰. Schließlic ist gerade in der Berufung auf Notre Dame jene von. Antonius van der Linde vergeblich gesuchte Steigerung gegenüber einer Königin enthalten. Nur vor der Gottesmutter konnte ein König ohne Gesichtsverlust seine Knie beugen. Doch der Zweifel, ob das auch auf dem so profanen

¹⁶⁶ Jacob Silbermann / Wolfgang Unzicker: Geschichte des Schachs, München 1975, S. 43.

¹⁶⁷ Joachim Petzold: König und Dame. Figuren im Schach, in: Urania, 1981, Nr. 6. S. 3 ff.

¹⁶⁸ Joachim Petzold: Schach. Eine Kulturgeschichte, Leipzig 1986, S. 151. Das Buch ist bis auf Titel und Umschlag identisch mit Das Königliche Spiel. Eine Kulturgeschichte des Schach, Stuttgart 1987. Vgl. dazu neuerdings das Stichwort Dame in Meyers Schachlexikon, herausgegeben und bearbeitet von Otto Borik ... in Zusammenarbeit mit

... Joachim Petzold u. a., Mannheim 1993, S. 59.

¹⁶⁹ Hans Holländer: Ein Spiel aus dem Osten, in: Die Begegnung des Westens mit dem Osten. Kongressakten des 4. Symposiums des Mediävistenverbandes in Köln 1991 aus Anlass des 1000. Todesjahres der Kaiserin Theophanu, herausgegeben von Odilo Engels und Peter Schreiner, Sigmaringen 1993. Es ist zu erwarten, dass der Kunsthistoriker Holländer uns aus der Welt der Kunst noch andere Erklärungsmodelle, beispielsweise aus dem Umfeld des Marcus Hieronymus Vida, liefern wird.

¹⁷⁰ Josef Seifert: Schachphilosophie, Darmstadt 1989, S. 121 ff.

Schachbrett demonstriert wurde, muss mit weiteren Argumenten zerstreut werden.

Zunächst ist zu fragen, was Dame eigentlich bedeutet. Der Begriff leitet sich vom lateinischen Wort *Domina* ab. So nannte man im Römischen Reich die Frau eines Gutsbesitzers, im mittelalterlichen Frankreich die eines Ritters. Später wurde von Hofdamen gesprochen.

Doch genau wie beim männlichen Gegenstück *dominus* (Herr) gab es frühzeitig einen direkten Bezug zu Gott. Bei der Christus-Mutter Maria wurde aber seltener von einer *Domina* gesprochen. Ihre Bezeichnungen lauten *virgo* (Jungfrau), *mater* (Mutter) und schliesslich *Notre Dame* (Unsere Herrin). In Deutschland nannte man die zahlreichen ihr gewidmeten Kirchen "Unserer lieben Frauen". Der mittelalterliche Dom aller Doms in Paris trägt aber den Namen, der vor dem Hintergrund der geradezu rauschhaften Marienverehrung im 15. Jahrhundert direkt zur Bezeichnung Dame im Schach geführt haben könnte.

Als der Sekretär der französischen Akademie der Wissenschaften und Schönen Künste Nicolas Fréret am 24 Juli 1719 vor König Ludwig XV. und der Versailler Hofgesellschaft über die Ursprünge des Schachspiels sprach, machte er darauf aufmerksam, daß die *Vesir*-Bezeichnung fierge im Französischen wie *vierge* (Jungfrau) klang. Er war der erste, der wenigstens in die Richtung *Notre Dame* dachte, wenn er auch noch nicht wagte, auf mehr als phonetische Zusammenhänge hinzuweisen¹⁷¹. Der deutsche Schachhistoriker Tassilo von der Lasa, an sich ein hervorragender Kenner des mittelalterlichen Schachs, bemerkte dazu: "Vor noch nicht langer Zeit hegte man die, jetzt aber aufgegebene Ansicht, der Übergang von *vesir* zu Königin lasse sich mit Hilfe sprachlicher und sachlicher Ähnlichkeiten herstellen.

Aus *Vesir* sei *Vierge* und Königin geworden¹⁷². Die größte Autorität auf dem Gebiete der Schachgeschichtsforschung, der

¹⁷¹ Nicolas Fréret: *L'origine du jeu des eschecs*, in: *Histoire de l'Académie Royale des inscriptions et belles lettres*, tome 5, Paris 1729, S. 250 ff.

¹⁷² T. von der Lasa: *Zur Geschichte und Literatur des Schachspiels*, Leipzig 1897, S. 60.

Engländer Harold James Ruthven Murray, hat es in seinem Standardwerk "A History of Chess" bei der Erwähnung dieser Meinung bewenden lassen¹⁷³. Richard Eales, der die symbolische Bedeutung des Schachspiels im Mittelalter so hervorragend. herauszuarbeiten vermochte, folgte ihm bei dieser Zurückhaltung¹⁷⁴. Die Mediävisten unter den Fachhistoriker sind noch zurückhaltender. Im großen "Lexikon des Mittelalters" wird unter dem Stichwort Dame nicht einmal erwähnt, dass damit auch die Gottesmutter ("Notre Dame") gemeint sein konnte. Das ist eigentlich angesichts der Vielen Dombenennungen ein kaum erklärbarer Kunstfehler. Arno Borst, dem wir eine sehr bemerkenswerte Studie über ein fast Vollig vergessenes mittelalterliches Zahlenkampfspiel, genannt Rhythmomachia, verdanken, wundert sich lediglich, daß auch in diesem Spiele der die Zahlenpyramide piramis krönende Schlußstein von einem bayerischen Kompilator um 1105 mit dem Zusatz versehen wurde "id est regina" (das ist die Königin).

Arno Borst sah darin eine "Ungeheuerlichkeit", weil das eine ganz außerordentliche Würdigung des Weiblichen wäre: "Natürlich. dachte er (der bayrische Kompilator - J.P.) an keine zeitgenössische Herrscherin, etwa die deutsche. Eine regierende Königin trat im. Reiche nach dem Aufstand der Russin Praxedis gegen Heinrich IV. 1093 und vor der Heirat der Engländerin Mathilde mit Heinrich V. 1114 nicht auf. Auch die regina in 'Ruodlieb' (einem Ritterroman mit Schachbezug J.P.) hatte nichts anderes zu tun, als kostbaren Schmuck zu tragen¹⁷⁵."

Selbst Arno Borst, der sich wie kaum ein anderer in der geistigen Kultur des Mittelalters auskennt und der von allen Mediaevisten dem Homo ludens die größte Beachtung schenkt¹⁷⁶, war es also bei der Feststellung dieser "Ungeheuerlichkeit" nicht bewußt geworden, daß der krönende Abschluß der so symbolträchtigen Zahlenpyramide mit einer Regina in nichtweltliche

¹⁷³ H.J.R. Murray: A History of Chess, Oxford 1913, S. 423 f.

¹⁷⁴ Richard Eales: Chess. The History of a Game, London 1985.

¹⁷⁵ Arno Borst: Das mittelalterliche Zahlenkampfspiel, Heidelberg 1986, S. 168.

¹⁷⁶ Compare here his article in the "Frankfurter Allgemeinen Zeitung" of the 29th November 1987 "Kampfspiel der Geschichte. Der "Homo ludens" in present and the Middle Ages".

Herrschaftsbereiche führen konnte. Das ganze Mittelalter hindurch galt die Gottesmutter Maria als die Königin des Himmels. Zahllose Altarbilder legen davon Zeugnis ab. Eines der bedeutendsten Kirchenlieder aus damaliger Zeit die Missa "Ave regina caelorum - sprach es für alle Menschen unüberhörbar aus. Die im. 11. Jahrhundert längst nachweisbare und im 15. Jahrhundert ihren Hohepunkt erreichende Marienverehrung durchdrang aber nicht nur die Kunst, sondern auch das Alltagsleben.

Arno Borst vertrat die Meinung: "Nein, die Pyramide im Zahlenkampf, von der Fränkischen Kompilation bereits zur Leitfigur befördert, erhielt den Titel Königin einzig und allein wegen der Figur im Schachspiel, die man damals regina, später Dame nannte¹⁷⁷. Wäre das richtig, dann hätte sich die "Ungeheuerlichkeit", daß der wichtigste Stein weiblichen Geschlechts war, lediglich von einem Spiel ins andere verlagert. Die Schachkönigin war jedoch das ganze Mittelalter hindurch eine schwache Spielfigur, die lediglich diagonal ins nächste Feld zu ziehen vermochte und, deutlich hinter dem König zurückstand. Sie wurde zudem in der Zeit, da der bayerische Kompilator des Rhythmomachia am Werke war, noch ausschließlich nach ihrem persisch-arabischen Vorbild Wesir genannt. Erst als im Verlaufe des 12. Jahrhunderts die Schachfiguren-namen europäisiert wurden, bürgerte sich die Bezeichnung Königin ein. Es ist geradezu ein Kriterium dafür, ob ein Manuskript mit Schachbezug vor oder nach 1150 geschrieben wurde, wie der Name des Vorgängers der Dame lautet. Selbst als das Wort Königin schon längst üblich war, mußte eine durch Bauerumwandlung entstandene weiterhin Wesir genannt werden¹⁷⁸.

Die für einen Schachhistoriker am schwersten zu beantwortende Frage lautet, ob der mittelalterliche Mensch das Irdische so mit dem Himmlischen zu verknüpfen vermochte, daß er keinen Anstod daran nahm, den krönenden Schlußstein Regina im

¹⁷⁷ Arno Borst: Das mittelalterliche Zahlenspiel, a.a.O., S. 168. In einem Brief an mich aus dem Frühjahr 1991 hat er aber die Möglichkeit, dass damit die Himmelskönigin gemeint sein könnte, eingeräumt.

¹⁷⁸ H.J.R. Murray: A History of Chess, a.a.O., S. 417 ff.

Spiel mit der Königin im Himmel in Verbindung zu bringen. Arno Borst hat das in seinem Buche "Lebensformen im Mittelalter" in anderen Zusammenhängen ebenso bejaht wie sein Namensvetter Otto Borst in dem Buche "Alltagsleben im Mittelalter". Von ersterem wurde die 'mittelalterliche Lebensform geradezu im Spannungsverhältnis zwischen der gebrechlichen Sündhaftigkeit des Irdischen einerseits und der Sehnsucht nach ewigen Leben andererseits gesehen¹⁷⁹. Es war daher nur folgerichtig, daß buchstäblich alles in Bezug zum christlichen Glauben gesetzt wurde. Letzterer hat auf den tiefen Gegensatz verwiesen, der mittelalterliches Verhalten vom modernen scheidet und durchaus nicht zufällig die damalige Lebenswelt auf dem Schachbrett beginnen lassen, weil von der englischen "Moralitas de scaccario" über die Schachpredigt des Jacobus de Cessolis bis zu ihrer Bearbeitung durch Konrad von Ammenhausen der Grundsatz galt: "Die Ordnung der Spielfiguren ist die Ordnung der Welt¹⁸⁰."

Der grosse italienische Dichter Dante hat sich in seiner "Göttlichen Komödie", nicht gescheut, seine irdische Geliebte mit der himmlischen Jungfrau Maria zu vergleichen und beide entsprechend anzubeten. Ähnliches lässt sich von dem späten Minnesänger Heinrich von Meißen sagen, der deshalb den Ehrennamen Frauenlob erhielt. Betrachtet man die spätmittelalterlichen Marienbilder genauer, so scheinen sie ganz von diesem Geiste durchdrungen zu sein. Noch bei Michelangelo ist die trauernde Gottesmutter der berühmten Pieta-Skulptur auch dem Alter nach eine Jungfrau. Man nahm keinen Anstoß daran, daß die Königin des Himmels zugleich als die Königin des Irdischen in einem ganz persönlichen Sinne dargestellt wurde. Im 15. Jahrhundert rühmte der so kunstverständige Papst Pius II. (Enea Silvio Piccolomini) Deutschland wegen seiner vielen der Jungfrau Maria geweihten Kirchen. In Spanien, wo die Schachspielreform wahrscheinlich ihren Ausgang nahm und die Umbenennung der Königin in Dame zuerst erfolgte, gab es gross Wettbewerbe der Dichter zu Ehren der Madonna, bei denen auch ihre Schönheit gepriesen wurde. In Württemberg bekam jedes

¹⁷⁹ Arno Borst: Lebensformen im Mittelalter, Frankfurt a.M./Berlin 1973.

¹⁸⁰ Otto Borst: Alltagsleben im Mittelalter, Frankfurt a.M. 1983, S. 59.

zehnte neugeborene Mädchen den Namen Maria. Notre Dame war allgegenwärtig. Warum nicht auch auf dem Schachbrett?

Als vermutlich um 1300 in England eine Geschichtensammlung aus altrömischer Zeit unter den Namen "Gesta Romanorum" zusammengestellt wurde, die Anregungen für volkstümliche Predigten geben und die sich gewissermassen als ein mittelalterlicher Bestseller erweisen sollte, griff man die Legenden über die Entstehung des Schachspiels auf. Im Kapitel "Vom Schachspiel" war zu lesen, daß der König' auf den 64-Feldern des Schachbrettes auch als "unser Herr Jesus Christus, der der König ist über alle im Himmel und auf Erden," betrachtet werden könne. Er dürfe schließlich überall hinziehen. "Endlich nimmt er auch die Königin mit sich, das heisst die fromme Mutter des Erbarmens, unsere Frau Maria"¹⁸¹."

Die Gebrüder Wichmann waren die ersten, die auf die Bedeutung dieser Gleichsetzung in dem Schachkapitel der "Gesta Romanorum" verwiesen und in ihr eine "letzte Aufgipfelung" der moralisierenden Betrachtungsweise von spielen im Mittelalter sahen¹⁸². So verdienstvoll die Dissertationen von Heinz-Jürgen Kliewer und Burkhard Malich zur Erforschung spätmittelalterlicher Schach- und Spiel-Allegorien beitrugen, diesem Zeugnis höchster Wertschätzung in Anlehnung an die berühmte Schachpredigt des Dominikaners Jacobus de Cessolis wurde nicht die gebührende Beachtung geschenkt¹⁸³. Wie die Mediaevisten unter den Historikern, so haben auch die Germanisten hinsichtlich der Rolle des Schachspiels im

¹⁸¹ Gesta Romanorum. Geschichten von den Römern. Ein Erzählbuch des Mittelalters. Erstmals in vollständiger Übersetzung herausgegeben von Winfried Trillitzsch, Leipzig 1973, S. 179 f. The Chapter about Chess is in S. 166.

¹⁸² Hans und Siegfried Wichmann: Schach. Ursprung und Wandlung der Spielfigur in zwölf Jahrhunderten, München 1960, S. 43.

¹⁸³ Heinz-Jürgen Kliewer: Die mittelalterliche Schachallegorie und die deutschen Schachzabelbücher in der Nachfolge des Jacobus de Cessolis, gedruckte phil. Dissertation, Heidelberg 1966; Burkhard Malich: Die spätmittelalterlichen deutschen Spielallegorien als sozialgeschichtliche Quele, vervielfältigte phil. Dissertation, Halle 1971.

Minnesang eine gewisse Geringschätzung zu überwinden¹⁸⁴. Eine rühmliche Ausnahme macht Peter Wapnewski, der in einer Studie über Walther von der Vogelweide zeigte, wie damals mit Schachbegriffen argumentiert wurde¹⁸⁵. Er kam Hans Ferdinand Massmann am nächsten, der 1839 eine aus der Sicht des Germanisten geschriebene Geschichte des Schachspiels vorlegte¹⁸⁶. Der für mittelalterliches Denken offensichtlich nicht zu weitgehende Vergleich in den „Gesta Romanorum“ ist der direkte Beweis dafür, dass die Königin im Schach mit der Königin im Himmel schon lange vor der grossen Schachspielreform gleichgesetzt wurde, dass der Gleichklang von *de la dame* und *notre dame* nicht überraschend kam¹⁸⁷. Es gab für

¹⁸⁴ Eine vermutlich noch nicht vollständige Zusammenstellung der Schachbezüge bei den Minnesängern hat Helmut Faust vorgenommen, dessen 52 Studienbriefe zur Kulturgeschichte des Schachspiels aber leider nur hektografiert vorliegen.

¹⁸⁵ Peter Wapnewski, *Der Sänger und die Dame. Zu Walthers Schachlied – Reinmars Rechtfertigung*, in: *Waz ist minne. Studien zur Mittelhochdeutschen Lyrik*, München 1975, S. 74-108, 181-194. Wapnewski hat auch unter Berufung auf die Freiburger phil. Dissertation Ewald Eiserhardt „Die mittelalterliche Schachterminologie des Deutschen“ (1906) darauf verwiesen, dass „in der hoch- wie niederdeutschen Sprache des Mittelalters die königinne des Schachspiels auch einfach frouwe heissen kann“ (S. 98). Das ist insofern wichtig, weil ein damaliger Schachspieler in den vielen „unser lieben frouwen“ geweihten Kirchen sehr wohl an die Schachkönigin denken konnte.

¹⁸⁶ H. F. Massmann: *Geschichte des mittelalterlichen, vorzugsweise des Deutschen Schachspiels*, Quedlinburg und Leipzig 1839. Im § 9 gab Massmann die schon bekannten Erklärungen zur Königin als Frau des Königs. Beim Begriff Dame erinnerte er daran, dass Jacobus de Cessolis in seiner Schachpredigt von der Königin als einer Domina gesprochen hatte. Er verwies auf die Wandlung von fierge zu vierge, zitierte ohne Beleg Sainte Vierge (Holy Virgin), betonte aber die Galanterie des Minnesangs. (S. 33)

¹⁸⁷ Da das Schachspiel so populär und symbolträchtig war, wurden auch in den „Gesta Romanorum“ mancherlei Erklärungen gegeben: „Fragt man, warum die Königin dem Kampf ausgesetzt wird, da doch das weibliche Geschlecht schwach und gebrechlich ist, so muss man sagen, dass sie der Sitte derjenigen Frauen folgt, die samt ihren Familien mit ins Lager genommen werden, wenn ihre Männer in den Krieg ziehen,

die Kompilatoren der "Geschichten von den Römern" in dieser Beziehung Vorbilder und Nachahmer. In Frankreich hatte Gautier de Coincy bereits in seinen "Miracles de la Nostre Dame" geschrieben, dass im Leben Gott mit dem Teufel eine Partie Schach um das Seelenheil der Menschen spiele. Die Jungfrau Maria als seine Königin helfe ihm dabei. In Deutschland griff ein Dominikaner namens Ingold den Vergleich direkt auf. Er hatte sich im so spielfreudigen Spätmittelalter das Ziel gestellt, die Untugenden der Menschen mit geeigneten Spielen zu bekämpfen. Im Schach sah er recht treffend ein Mittel gegen den Hochmut. Als er auf die Zugweise der einzelnen Figuren zu sprechen kam, flieht er die Betrachtungen der Geste Romanorum über den Schachkönig und die Schachkönigin ein: "In dem Himmel ist Jesus Christusein König.... Desgleichen ist auch die Mutter des Königs eine Königin der Engel und aller himmlischer Heerscharen. Maria, die gewaltige Kaiserin, hat noch kein Spiel verloren." Beiden zur Seite stünden die Räte (die Schach-Elefanten) und die Ritter (die Schach-Springer) und die als Richter angesehenen Rochen (Schach-Türme)¹⁸⁸." Meister Ingolds in der ersten Hälfte des 15. Jahrhunderts geschriebenes Traktat erschien unter dem Titel "Das guldin spil" 1472 als frühestes vorrangig dem Schach gewidmetes gedrucktes Buch in Augsburg. Von dieser bedeutenden Handelsstadt aus unterhielten die Fugger und Welser intensive Handelsbeziehungen nach Spanien. Warum soll nicht auch dieses Buch dorthin gelangt sein? Im spanischen Valencia wirkte Dr. Miguel Albert, der sich nicht nur 1474 an einem Wettbewerb der Loblieder auf die heilige Jungfrau beteiligte, sondern der zwanzig Jahre später als Druckereibesitzer mit den deutschen Druckern Peter Trincer und Lope de la Roca (Wolf von Stein) das leider verschollende Schachbuch des Francesch Vicent

wie das bei den Tataren üblich ist... Das die Königin dem König in den Kampf folgt, geschieht zum Trost des Königs und um ihm ein Zeugnis der Liebe zu geben. Wir verstehen unter der Königin unsere Seele, welche im Himmel infolge ihrer guten Werke zur Königin gekrönt werden soll." (Gesta Romanorum a.a.o., S. 376 f.)

¹⁸⁸ Meister Ingold, Das Goldene Spiel, herausgegeben von Edward Schröder, Strassburg 1882, S. 41.

herausbrachte¹⁸⁹. Wir wissen nicht, ob dieses an der Schwelle vom alten zu neuen Schach stehende Buch schon die Bezeichnung Dame für Königin enthielt. Das hätte in diesem Zusammenhang für die allerdings sehr spekulative Annahme Bedeutung, dass der die Madonna lobpreisende Albert an der Übertragung des religiös interpretierten Dame-Begriffs auf das Schachspiel beteiligt gewesen wäre.

Schriftlich nachweisbar ist das Wort Dame in ersten erhalten gebliebenen Buch über das neue Schach. Es stammt von dem spanischen Juden Luis Ramirez Lucena und wird auf das Jahr 1497 datiert. Da es in einer zwar merkwürdigen, aber schon in den viel kopierten „Echecs amoureux“ vorkommenden Weise Ratschläge für die Kunst des Liebens und des Schachspielens verbindet, läge an sich der bereits erwähnte Schluss nahe, die Verwendung des Damebegriffs bei Lucena sei nur ein galantes Kompliment an die Frauen gewesen. Aber dem widerspricht nicht nur die Trennung der „Repetición de amores y arte de axedres“ in zwei scharf geschiedene Teile, sondern auch der Inhalt des der Liebeskunst gewidmeten. Barbara Matulka hat ihrer sehr eingehenden Untersuchung den Titel gegeben „An Anti-Feminist treatise of fifteenth Century Spain: Lucena's Repetición De Amores¹⁹⁰“.

Wenn auch diese feministische Sichtweise wohl der höfischen Galanterie einer von Männern geprägten Gesellschaft nicht ganz gerecht wird, so steht doch ausser Zweifel: In Lucenas Schach-Dame verkörpert sich nicht der Geist des zu Ende gegangenen Minnesangs sondern der einer neuen Zeit, die auch die Beziehungen zwischen den Geschlechtern zu verändern begann. Unwillkürlich wird man an die spanische Königin Isabella die Katholische erinnert, dass in einer königlichen Herrscherfamilie keineswegs der Mann der stärkere Teil sein musste. Wenn die Schach-Dame im neuen Schachspiel „a la rabiosa“ oder „de la dama“, wie die Italiener bald sagen sollten, über das Schachbrett

¹⁸⁹ Konrad Haebler: Geschichte des spanischen Frühdrucks in Stammbäumen, Leipzig 1923, S. 56 ff.

¹⁹⁰ Es handelt sich um eine Dissertation, die am Washington Square College der New Yorker Universität, Institute of French Studies, angefertigt wurde.

fegte, dann konnte das gerade bei einem spanischen Schachspieler recht weltliche Assoziationen auslösen.

Wer jedoch in den Kategorien der christlichen Religion dachte – und das waren die allermeisten – der musste die phonetische Brücke von fierge zu vierge, die doppelte Anwendbarkeit des Begriffs Königin auf das irdische und das himmlische Leben und nunmehr die Ableitungsmöglichkeit des Figurennamens Dame von “Notre Dame” zumindestens empfinden. Das war auch bei Herstellern von Schachfiguren der Fall.

Schon Adolph Goldschmidt, der sich so grosse Verdienste um die Erfassung der Elfenbein-Schnitzereien des Mittelalters erwarb, war aufgefallen, dass auf einem romanischen Schachstein die Madonna eingeschnitzt wäre, “so dass die Himmelskönigin hier die Rolle der Schachkönigin übernimmt”. Ihm war das jedoch mehr als eine Kuriosität erschienen. Er vermerkt ganz allgemein: “So enthüllt sich uns das interessante Schauspiel, wie man die arabischen Formen mit figürlichem Schmuck bedeckte, ohne dass man den ursprünglichen Sinn dieser Formen kannte, und zwar geschah es auf zweierlei Weise, einmal indem man auf der arabische Form etwas darstellte, was dem Titel des Steines entsprach, zum anderen Mal aber auf ihm Dinge bildete, die mit dem Sinn des Steines, soweit wir dies beurteilen können, gar nichts zu tun hatten¹⁹¹”. Goldsteins vorsichtige Formulierung zeigt, dass er irgendwie spürte, die Darstellung der Madonna auf einem arabischen Wesirstein könnte durchaus mehr bedeuten.

Frank Greygoose hat in seinem Schachfigurenbuch das Bild einer leider in Zweiten Weltkrieg verschollenen Schachkönigin aus dem Besitz der Berliner Staatlichen Museen veröffentlicht, die ganz als Madonna mit dem Kinde dargestellt ist, aber einen Sockel wie eine Schachfigur hat und deshalb als solche eingestuft wird¹⁹². Es gibt auch noch andere Madonnenskulpturen, die sehr wohl Schachfiguren gewesen sein könnten, aber im Laufe der Zeit zweckentfremdet wurden. Doch insgesamt ist Vorsicht am Platze. Eine eindeutige Einordnung in einen Schachfigurensatz, bei dem der König dann logischerweise eine Christusdarstellung

¹⁹¹ Die Elfenbeinskulpturen aus der romanischen Zeit XI. – XIII. Jahrhundert berbeitet von Adolph Goldschmidt, Vierter Band, Berlin 1926, S. 6, 3.

¹⁹² Frank Greygoose: Schachfiguren, Heidenheim 1979, S. 46.

sein müsste, ist bei alleinstehenden Madonnendarstellungen bisher noch nicht möglich gewesen.

1. Aus alledem ergeben sich folgende Schlussfolgerungen:

Es bestanden im Mittelalter verschiedene sprachliche Assoziationen, die von der Schachkönigin auf die Himmelskönigin verwiesen. Am wichtigsten war dabei der Gleichklang von *fierge* (Wesir) mit *vierge* (Jungfrau). Doch auch die Doppelbedeutungen von Königin, *Domina* und “unserer lieben frouwen” gehörten dazu.

2. Es ist schriftlich schon lange vor der Schachreform in den “*Gesta Romanorum*” und im “*guldin spil*” belegt, dass die Schachkönigin auch als Symbol der Himmelskönigin und damit der Madonna betrachtet wurde.

3. Es liegt daher nahe, anzunehmen, dass sich die uns unbekannt oder nur schemenhaft erkennbar gebliebenen Schachmeister, die im letzten Drittel des 15. Jahrhunderts das Schachspiel reformierten, derartiger Assoziationen und Gleichsetzungen bedienten, um die gesteigerte Zugkraft der Königin symbolhaft in der Verknüpfung von “*de la dame*” mit “*Notre Dame*” zum Ausdruck zu bringen.

4. Es soll keineswegs ausgeschlossen werden, dass es auch andere Bezugsmöglichkeiten wie die auf die Jungfrau von Orleans oder auf Isabella von Kastilien gegeben haben könnte. Für viele Schachspieler, die zunächst erst einmal ermitteln mussten, ob man auf alte Art mit der Königin oder auf neue Art mit der Dame spielen wollte, mag die Verwendung der Figurenbezeichnung *Domina* bei Jacobus de Cessolis eine ausreichende Begriffserklärung von Dame gewesen sein. Im übrigen hatte man jahrhundertlang mit dem *Wesir* gespielt, ohne eine Ahnung zu haben, was das Wort wirklich bedeutet.

5. Es blieb jedoch unerlässlich, bei einem so symbolbefrachteten Spiel wie dem Schach zu begründen, warum der König, um den sich doch letzten Endes alles drehte, gegenüber der übermächtig gewordenen Dame in den Hintergrund treten und sich so schnell wie möglich hinter dem Schutzwall seiner Bauern durch die Rochade verstecken musste.

Arno und Otto Borst haben jeder auf seine Weise die überragende Stellung des Königs in Ordnungsdenken des Mittelalters hervorgehoben. Auch wenn im 15. Jahrhundert die Zeiten längst

vorbei waren, da der König schwertgewaltig and der Spitze seines Heeres in die Schlacht zog, und stattdessen weitreichende Waffen wie Kanonen und Büchsen den Kampf entschieden, so musste man sich schon etwas einfallen lassen, um das speziell and Königshöfe auf dem Schachbrett demonstrieren zu können. Hinzu kam, dass wie Aaron J. Gurjewitsch in seinem vielbeachteten Buch “Das Weltbild des Mittelalterlichen Menschen” eindrucksvoll begründete, es sich in erster Linie um “ein religiöses Bewusstsein” handelte. Die sogenannten Homilien, die Predigtmuster und Predigsammlungen von der Art der “Gesta Romanorum”, spielten dabei eine wichtige, noch nicht ausreichend erforschte Rolle¹⁹³. Beides, das so ausgeprägte Ordnungsdenken und die tiefe Volksreligiosität des Mittelalters, spiegeln sich sogar auf dem Schachbrett wider und haben meiner Meinung nach in der zur Madonna erhobenen Schachkönigin einen merkwürdigen Niederschlag gefunden.

¹⁹³ Aaron J. Gurjewitsch: Das Weltbild des mittelalterlichen Menschen, Dresden 1978, S. 376, 385.

Appendix III

Joachim Petzold July 1994

Contribution to the Viennese workshop from 3 to 5 November 1994 on the topic “From the vizier to the queen”

How can the German term “Dame” be explained in chess?

It still has not been clarified why during the great chess reforms of the second half of the 15th century the queen got her German term *Dame* (English: *lady*). It was obvious that at least for a short time two different terms were needed for the Regina, which corresponded to the Persian-Arabian *ferz* (vizier) in the old game, and its board-dominating successor in the new game. Only when the new way of playing completely prevailed it was possible for the two terms to merge into synonyms queen/lady, and the traditional term queen to be used on its own without running the risk of confusion. The Spanish stayed with the term *dama*, and the Italians stayed with *donna*. The French also preferred *dame*. The linguistic asymmetry with the king (Rey, Re, Roi) was accepted. If the game of draughts (German: Dame) had been completely developed as a term by that time, one could conjecture a derivation from the pieces of draughts. It seems however that the opposite happened¹⁹⁴. Even though the game of draughts has been known since the 12th century, it was always in connection with the game of chess. The term *ferz* for the piece indicates towards that which sequentially and analogically became the queen. Already Gustavus Selenus (Duke August the younger of Braunschweig-Lüneburg) showed strong amazement in his chess book printed in Leipzig in 1616 - amazement about the fact that the mightiest chess pieces were women. He thought that the inventor of the game must have thought about the

¹⁹⁴ Arie van der Stoep: A History of Draughts, Rockanje 1984

Amazons¹⁹⁵. Günther Wahl, who popularized the research of Thomas Hyde in the German part of the world, even though without precisely citing the source from which he borrowed, wanted to completely ban the term queen or lady from chess because “it was utterly contrary to the morals of the Orient and the customs of the whole of Asia”. The piece to the left of the king should be of male gender. If it was changed to a woman in Europe, it must have happened only due to gallantry. Wahl credits the French knights with this “unbecoming” process of flattery towards women, hence in the end the minnesong that happened “gradually with general acclaim”¹⁹⁶. The great chess historian and bibliographer Antonius van der Linde initially disputed that the term lady in chess had anything to do with a woman.

The great chess historian and bibliographer Antonius van der Linde initially even denied that the word *Dame* in chess had anything at all to do with a woman. He rightfully said that it had to be an increase compared to the queen, but couldn’t see this expressed as *Dame*. Regarding his attempt to translate *Dame* from Greek with a stone thrown by intellect he remarked ominously: “Maybe... I am just telling exegetical errors”¹⁹⁷. The chess historian Jacob Silbermann was the first to find a plausible explanation for the fact that a qualitative leap compared to the wife of a king was hidden within the term *Dame* on the chessboard. He referred to the Maid of Orleans who was indeed addressed by the French not as a queen, but as a Dame, and who led the French king to victory over the English. The naming of the new queen that had become overpowering in chess had been

¹⁹⁵ Gustavus Selenus: Das Schach- oder König-Spiel, Leipzig 1616, p. 59

¹⁹⁶ S. F. Günter Wahl: Der Geist und die Geschichte des Schach-Spiels bei den Indern, Persern, Arabern, Türken, Sinesen und übrigen Morgenländern, den Indern, Persern, Arabern, Türken, Sinesen und übrigen Morgenländern, Deutschen und andern Europäern, Halle 1798 (Reprint Leipzig 1981, p. 162f.)

¹⁹⁷ Antonius van der Linde: Geschichte und Litteratur des Schachspiels, Berlin 1874, Volume. I, S. 321 f.

done in her honour¹⁹⁸. However, Joan of Arc was burnt as a witch in 1431. How could she have become the model for the queen in chess? Since 1981 the author holds the opinion that the term *Dame* in chess could be derived from Notre Dame, the Mother of God¹⁹⁹. He justifies this assumption in more detail in his cultural history of chess²⁰⁰. This attempt at an interpretation is met with scepticism: first and foremost by Hans Holländer²⁰¹ and also by Egbert Meissenburg and Kenneth Whyld, because it seems inconceivable to many that a chess piece received its name from the Virgin Mary. Only Josef Seifert recognized this attempt at an interpretation unrestrictedly²⁰². After all, the reference to Notre Dame contains the increase over a queen that Antonius van der Linde had been searching for in vain. Only before the Mother of God could a king bend his knee without losing face. However, the doubt if this was also demonstrated on the somewhat mundane chessboard must be dissipated with more arguments. Firstly one has to ask what *Dame* actually means. The term derives from the Latin word *domina*. This was the name for the wife of a landowner in the Roman Empire.

¹⁹⁸ Jacob Silbermann / Wolfgang Unzicker: *Geschichte des Schachs*, München 1975, S. 43

¹⁹⁹ Joachim Petzold: *König und Dame. Figuren im Schach*, in: *Urania*, 1981, Nr. 6. S. 3 ff.

²⁰⁰ Joachim Petzold: *Schach. Eine Kulturgeschichte*, Leipzig 1986, S. 151. Except for title and cover the book is identical to “Das Königliche Spiel. Eine Kulturgeschichte des Schach, Stuttgart 1987” (*The Royal Game. A Cultural History of Chess*, Stuttgart 1987). Compare the key word “*Dame*” in Meyer’s encyclopaedia of chess published and processed by Otto Borik in collaboration with Joachim Petzold et al., Mannheim 1993, p. 59

²⁰¹ Hans Holländer: *Ein Spiel aus dem Osten*, in: *Die Begegnung des Westens mit dem Osten. Kongressakten des 4. Symposiums des Mediävistenverbandes in Köln 1991 aus Anlass des 1000. Todesjahres der Kaiserin Theophanu*, herausgegeben von Odilo Engels und Peter Schreiner, Sigmaringen 1993. It is to be expected that the art historian Holländer will deliver other explanatory models from the world of art, e.g. from the entourage of Marcus Hieronymus Vida

²⁰² Josef Seifert: *Schachphilosophie*, Darmstadt 1989, S. 121 ff.

This was the name for the wife of a landowner in the Roman Empire and in medieval France for the wife of a knight. Later one spoke of court ladies. But just like with the male counterpart *dominus* (Lord) there was a direct reference to God at an early stage. However, Christ's Mother Mary was referred to rarely as a *domina*. Her designations are *virgo* (virgin), *mater* (mother), and finally *Notre Dame* (Our Lady). In Germany the numerous churches dedicated to her were called "Our dear women". However, the medieval cathedral of all cathedrals in Paris bears the name that, before the background of the downright ecstatic worshipping of Mary in the 15th century, may have led directly to the name *Dame* in chess. When the secretary of the French Academy of Sciences and Arts Nicolas Fréret spoke about the origins of chess before King Louis XV and the court of Versailles on 24 July 1719, he called attention to the fact that the vizier designation *fierge* sounded like *vierge* (virgin) in French. He was the first to at least think in the direction of *Notre Dame*, even though he did not yet dare to draw attention to more than phonetic connections²⁰³. The German chess historian Tassilo von der Lasa, a formidable scholar of medieval chess, commented: "Not long ago one harbored the now abandoned view that the transition from vizier to Queen could be made with the help of linguistic and factual similarities." From *Vesir* had been developed *Vierge* and Queen²⁰⁴. The biggest authority in the field of chess history research, Englishman Harold James Ruthven Murray, left it at the mentioning of this opinion in his standard work "A History of Chess"²⁰⁵. Richard Eales, who was able to work out the symbolic meaning of chess in the Middle Ages excellently, followed him in this restraint²⁰⁶. The medievalists among professional historians are even more cautious. In the big "Lexicon of the Middle Ages" it is not even mentioned under the heading "Dame" that the Mother of God

²⁰³ Nicolas Fréret: L'origine du jeu des eschecs, in: Histoire de l'Académie Royale des inscriptions et belles lettres, tome 5, Paris 1729, S. 250 ff.

²⁰⁴ T. von der Lasa: Zur Geschichte und Literatur des Schachspiels, Leipzig 1897, S. 60

²⁰⁵ H.J.R. Murray: A History of Chess, Oxford 1913, S. 423 f.

²⁰⁶ Richard Eales: Chess. The History of a Game, London 1985

("Notre Dame") could be meant. Given the many denominations of domes this is a hardly explicable malpractice. Arno Borst, to whom we owe a very remarkable study of an almost completely forgotten medieval game of numbers called rithmomachy, is merely wondering that in this game the key stone that crowns the number pyramid *piramis* is provided with the addendum "*id est regina*" (this is the Queen). Arno Borst saw in this an "enormity", as this would be an extraordinary appreciation of the feminine: "Naturally he (the Bavarian compiler – J.P.) was not thinking of a contemporary monarch, e.g. the German one."

A reigning queen did not appear in the kingdom after the uprising of the Russian Praxedis against Henry IV in 1093 and before the marriage of Englishwoman Mathilde to Henry V in 1114. The Regina in 'Ruodlieb' (a romance with references to chess – J.P.) had nothing else to do than wear expensive jewellery²⁰⁷. Even Arno Borst who knows the spiritual culture of the Middle Ages like hardly anyone else and who among all medievalists pays the most attention to the *Homo ludens*²⁰⁸ was not aware when determining this "enormity" that the crowning conclusion of this highly symbolic number pyramid with a Regina could lead into nonsecular domains. Throughout the entirety of the Middle Ages the Mother of God Mary counted as the Queen of Heaven. Countless altarpieces bear witness to that. One of the greatest hymns of that time, the Missa "*Ave regina caelorum*", said it unmistakably for everyone. The Marian devotion, long provable in the 11th century and reaching its pinnacle in the 15th, permeated not only the arts, but also everyday life. Arno Borst held the opinion: "No, the pyramid in a figure fight, already promoted by the Frankish compilation to a leading figure, received the title Queen solely because of the figure in the game of chess which

²⁰⁷ Arno Borst: *Das mittelalterliche Zahlenkampfspiel*, Heidelberg 1986, p. 168

²⁰⁸ Compare his article of 29 November 1987 in *Frankfurter Allgemeinen Zeitung* "Kampfspiel der Geschichte. Der 'Homo Ludens' in Present and the Middle Ages".

was then called regina, later Dame”²⁰⁹. If that were correct, then the “enormity” that the most important piece was of female gender, would just have been moved from one game to another. Throughout the entirety of the Middle Ages the queen in chess was a weak figure who could merely move diagonally onto the next field and stood back behind the King. Moreover, at a time where the Bavarian compiler of the *Rithmomachia* was at work she was exclusively called after her Persian-Arab paragon vizier. Only when with the progression of the 12th century the names of chess pieces were Europeanized the term Queen was vernacularized. How the predecessor of the “Dame” is named is almost a criterion for determining whether a manuscript with chess reference was written before or after 1150. Even after the word Queen was long common one resulting from a pawn promotion still had to be called vizier²¹⁰. The most difficult question to answer for a chess historian is whether a medieval human was able to relate the earthly with the heavenly without taking offense when connecting the crowning finishing piece Regina in the game with the Queen in heaven. Arno Borst affirmed this in other contexts in his book *Life Forms of the Middle Ages* just like his namesake Otto Borst in the book *Everyday Life in the Middle Ages*. The former saw medieval life almost in a relationship of tension between the frail sinfulness of the earthly on one hand and the desire for eternal life on the other²¹¹. It was therefore only logical that literally everything was set in relation to the Christian faith. The latter pointed out the profound opposition that separated medieval behaviour from the modern, and let life of the world of then, not at all haphazardly, begin on the chessboard, because from the English “Moralitas de scaccario” to the chess preaching of Jacobus de Cessolis to their procession by Konrad von Ammenhausen the rule was: “The

²⁰⁹ Arno Borst: Das mittelalterliche Zahlenspiel, a.a.O., S. 168. In a letter to me from spring 1991 he admitted the possibility that the Queen of Heaven could be meant by that

²¹⁰ H.J.R. Murray: A History of Chess, a.a.O., p. 417 ff.

²¹¹ Arno Borst: *Life Forms of the Middle Ages*, Frankfurt a.M./Berlin 1973

order of the chess figures is the order of the world.”²¹² In his *Divine Comedy* the great Italian poet Dante did not hesitate to compare his earthly mistress with the heavenly Virgin Mary and worshipped both accordingly. The same can be said of the late minstrel Heinrich von Meißen who hence received the honorary name Frauenlob. If we consider the late medieval images of Mary more closely, they seem to be completely imbued with this spirit. Even in the work of Michelangelo the grieving Mother of God of the famous Pieta sculpture is of the age of a virgin. One did not take offense at the fact that the Queen of Heaven was at the same time shown as the Queen of the earthly in a very personal sense. In the 15th century the art of so circumspect Pope Pius II (Enea Silvio Piccolomini) praised Germany because of its many churches dedicated to the Virgin Mary. In Spain, where the chess reform probably had its origin and the renaming of the Queen to Dame was first carried out, there were big competitions among poets in honour of Our Lady where her beauty was also praised. In Württemberg every tenth newborn girl was named Maria. Notre !Arno Borst: Das mittelalterliche Zahlenkampfspiel, Heidelberg 1986, p. 168.!

Dame was omnipresent. Why not also on the chessboard? When probably around 1300 in England a collection of stories from ancient Roman times that gave suggestions for popular sermons and effectively became a medieval bestseller was put together under the name *Gesta Romanorum*, one took on the legends about the origins of chess. In the chapter ‘On the game of chess’ one could read that the king on the 64 fields of the chessboard could be considered “our Lord Jesus Christ who is the king of all in heaven and on earth”. He could, after all, move anywhere. “Finally he also takes the Queen with him, that is, the pious mother of mercy - our Lady Mary.”²¹³ The Wichmann brothers were first to point out the importance of this equalization in the chess section of *Gesta Romanorum* and saw in it a “final

²¹² Otto Borst: : Alltagsleben im Mittelalter (Everyday life in the Middle Ages), Frankfurt a.M. 1983, p. 59.

²¹³ *Gesta Romanorum*: Stories of the Romans. A book of the Middle Ages. First published by Winfried Trillitzsch, Leipzig 1973, p. 179 f. The Chapter about Chess is on p. 166

culmination” of the moralizing approach of games in the Middle Ages²¹⁴. However much the dissertations of Heinz-Jürgen Kliewer and Burkhard Malich contributed to the exploration of late medieval chess and game allegories, this testimony of the highest appreciation in imitation of the famous chess sermon of the Dominican Jacobus de Cessolis was not given due attention²¹⁵. Like the medievalists among the historians the specialists in German studies have to overcome certain contempt regarding the role of chess in minstrelsy²¹⁶. A notable exception is made by Peter Wapnewski who in a study about Walther von der Vogelweide demonstrated how people used chess terms to argue²¹⁷. He came closest to Hans Ferdinand Massmann who in 1839 presented a story of chess written from the perspective of a

²¹⁴ Hans und Siegfried Wichmann: *Schach. Ursprung und Wandlung der Spielfigur in zwölf Jahrhunderten*, München 1960, S. 43

²¹⁵ Heinz-Jürgen Kliewer: *Die mittelalterliche Schachallegorie und die deutschen Schachzabelbücher in der Nachfolge des Jacobus de Cessolis*, gedruckte phil. Dissertation, Heidelberg 1966; Burkhard Malich: *Die spätmittelalterlichen deutschen Spielallegorien als sozialgeschichtliche Quelle*, vervielfältigte phil. Dissertation, Halle 1971

²¹⁶ A probably not yet complete assortment of the minstrel's chess remunerations has been made by Helmut Faust whose 52 course books about the cultural history of chess unfortunately only exist hectographed.

²¹⁷ Peter Wapnewski, *Der Sänger und die Dame. Zu Walthers Schachlied – Reinmars Rechtfertigung*, in: *Waz ist minne. Studien zur Mittelhochdeutschen Lyrik*, München 1975, s. 74-108, 181-194. Wapnewski also cited with reference to the Freiburgian phil. dissertation Ewald Eiserhardt "The medieval chess terminology of the German" (1906) that "in the high as well as the low German language of the Middle Ages the queens of the chess game can simply be named Frouwe" (p.98). This is important because a then chess player could very well think of the chess queen in the many churches consecrated to "our dear frouwen".

specialist in German studies²¹⁸. The comparison in *Gesta Romanorum* that for medieval thinking apparently did not stretch the point is the direct proof that the queen in chess was equated with the Queen in Heaven long before the great chess reform, that the consonance of *de la dame* and *notre dame* did not come as a surprise²¹⁹.

In this regard there were role models and imitators for the compilers of the Stories of the Romans. In France Gautier de Coincy had already written in his *Miracles de la Nostre Dame* that in life God played a game of chess with the devil for the salvation of humans. The Virgin Mary as his queen would help him with that. In Germany a Dominican named Ingold directly took on the comparison. In the so playful late Middle Ages he set himself the goal to fight the vices of people with suitable games. In chess he quite aptly saw a remedy for arrogance. When he came to speak of the movement of individual figures, he wove in the observations from *Gesta Romanorum* about the chess king and the chess queen: “In heaven Jesus Christ isa king.... Likewise the Mother of the King is a Queen of Angels and of all the heavenly host.”

²¹⁸ H. F. Massmann: Geschichte des mittelalterlichen, vorzugsweise des Deutschen Schachspiels, Quedlinburg und Leipzig 1839. In §9 Massmann provided the already known explanations to the Queen as the wife of the King. Concerning the term *Dame* he brings to mind that Jacobus de Cessolis spoke of the queen as a *Domina* in his chess sermon. He referred to the conversion of *fierge* to *vierge*, cited without evidence *Sainte Vierge* (Holy Virgin), but stressed the gallantry of courtly lovesongs.

²¹⁹ Seeing that the game of chess was so popular and symbolic, several explanations were given in *Gesta Romanum*: “If you ask why the queen is exposed to the battle, seeing that the female sex is weak and frail, it must be said that she follows the custom of those women who are taken together with their families to camp when their men go to war as it was common among the Tatars... That the queen follows the king into battle happens for the king’s consolation and to give him proof of her love. We understand the queen of our soul who is to be crowned in heaven because of her good deeds.” (*Gesta Romanorum* a.a.o., p 376 f.)

Maria, the formidable Empress, has not yet lost a game.” On both sides the Councils (the chess elephants), the Knights (the chess knights), and the Rothen (chess rook) considered as judges would be standing²²⁰. The treatise of Master Ingold written in the first half of the 15th century was published under the title *Das guldin spil* in 1472 in Augsburg as the earliest printed book primarily dedicated to chess. From this significant trade city the Fugger and Welser maintained intensive trade relationships with Spain. Why should the book not have gotten there too? In Valencia, Spain Dr. Miguel Albert was operating who not only took part in a competition of songs praising the Holy Virgin in 1474, but also, twenty years later as a print shop owner together with the German printers Peter Trincer and Lope de la Roca (Wolf von Stein), published the unfortunately lost chess book of Francesch Vicent²²¹. We do not know whether this book that stood on the threshold from old to new chess already contained the term *Dame* for queen. In this context this would have meaning for the very speculative assumption that the Madonna-worshipping Albert would have been involved in the transmission of the religiously inspired term *Dame* to the game of chess. The word *Dame* is detectable in writing in the first extant books about the new chess. It originates from the Spanish Jew Luis Ramirez Lucena and is dated to the year 1497. Since it combines in a rather strange but already much copied “Echecs amoureux” manner advice on the art of loving and playing chess, the already mentioned conclusion is that the use of the term *Dame* given by Lucena was only a gallant compliment to women.

But this is contradicted not only by separation of the *Repetición de amores y arte de axedres* into two sharply disconnected parts, but also the content of the one dedicated to the art of love. Barbara Matulka gave her very thorough investigation the title *An Anti-Feminist treatise of fifteenth Century Spain: Lucena's Repetición de Amores*.²²²

²²⁰ Meister Ingold, *Das Goldene Spiel*, herausgegeben von Edward Schröder, Strassburg 1882, S. 41

²²¹ Konrad Haebler: *Geschichte des spanischen Frühdrucks in Stammbäumen*, Leipzig 1923, S. 56 ff.

²²² This refers to a dissertation produced at the Washington Square College of the New York University, Institute of French Studies.

Even though this feminist perspective probably did not entirely live up to the courtly gallantry of a male-dominated society, one thing is certain: The chess Dame of Lucenas embodies not the spirit of the ended courtly lovesong, but one of a new era, which also started to change the relationships between the sexes. One is involuntarily reminded of the Spanish Queen Isabella the Catholic - the man within a royal ruling family by no means had to be the stronger part. When the chess Dame in the new game of chess “a la rabiosa” or “de la dama” as the Italians would soon say, swept across the chessboard, it could trigger quite worldly associations, especially regarding a Spanish chess player. But those who thought in terms of the Christian religion – and those were the majority – had to at least sense the phonetic bridge from *fierge* to *vierge*, the double applicability of the term queen with regard to the earthly and heavenly life and henceforth the possible derivation of the name of the figure Dame from “Notre Dame”. This was also the case with producers of chess pieces.

Even Adolph Goldschmidt, who acquired such great merits regarding the registration of the ivory carvings of the Middle Ages, noticed that the Madonna was carved into a Romanesque chess piece, “so that the Queen of Heaven takes over the role of the Chess Queen”. However, he perceived this as nothing more than a curiosity. He notes in general: “Here the interesting spectacle is revealed to us of how Arabic forms were covered with figural decorations without knowing the original meaning of these forms, and this happened in two ways: on one hand by depicting something on the Arabic forms that corresponded with the title of the stone, on the other hand however, by depicting things that had nothing to do with the meaning of the stone as far as we can tell.”²²³ Goldstein’s careful wording shows that he somehow felt that the depicting of the Madonna on an Arab vizier stone could very well mean more. In his book about chess figures Frank Greygoose published the picture of a chess queen (from the possessions of the Berlin State Museum that was unfortunately lost during the Second World War) who was entirely depicted as Madonna with the child, but possesses the

²²³ Die Elfenbeinskulpturen aus der romanischen Zeit XI. – XIII. Jahrhundert berbeitet von Adolph Goldschmidt, Vierter Band, Berlin 1926, S. 6, 3

base of a chess figure and was therefore classified as such²²⁴. There are other Madonna sculptures that could probably have been chess figures, but have been misused over the course of time. But overall one has to be cautious. A decisive classification of a set of chess pieces, in which the king then logically would be a depiction of Christ, has not been possible with a single depictions of the Madonna.

1. All this allows the following conclusions:
In the Middle Ages there existed several different linguistic associations that referred from the chess queen to the Queen in Heaven. The most important thing was the consonance of *fierge* (vizier) and *vierge* (Virgin). However, the double meaning of queen, domina, and “our dear frouwen” also had to be included.
2. Long before the chess reform in *Gesta Romanorum* and the “guldin spil” it was evidenced in writing that the chess queen was regarded as a symbol of the Queen in Heaven and thus of the Madonna.
3. It is therefore reasonable to assume that the unknown to us or only dimly recognizable masters of chess who reformed the game of chess in the last third of the 15th century made use of such associations and equalization in order to symbolically express the increased traction of the Queen in the linking of “de la dame” with “Notre Dame”.
4. Under no circumstances should it be ruled out that there could have existed other possible sources of reference like the Maid of Orleans or Isabella of Castile. For many chess players who first had to determine whether they wanted to play in the old way with the queen or in the new way with the Dame Jacobus de Cessolis’s usage of the term *Domina* may have been a sufficient definition of Dame. Incidentally people used to play with the vizier for centuries without knowing what the word actually means.
5. However, regarding a highly symbolic game like chess, it remained essential to justify why the king, around whom everything eventually centered, had to be pushed into the background compared to the now overpowering Dame and

²²⁴ Frank Greygoose: *Schachfiguren*, Heidenheim 1979, S. 46

had to retreat as fast as possible behind the bulwark of the pawns by using the castling.

Arno and Otto Borst have each in their own way highlighted the supremacy of the king in the order thinking of the Middle Ages. Even when in the 15th century the times had long gone when the king, laden with swords, went to war at the head of his army and instead of far-reaching weapons such as canons and rifles deciding the battle one had to come up with something to demonstrate the specialty of the royal courts on the chessboard. Furthermore, as Aaron J. Gurjewitsch impressively substantiated in his widely acclaimed book *The World View of the Medieval Human*, it is primarily about “religious awareness”. The so-called homilies, preaching patterns and collections in the type of *Gesta Romanorum*, played an important, not yet sufficiently explored role²²⁵. Both the pronounced order thinking and the deep religiosity of the Middle Ages are reflected on the chessboard and have, in my opinion, found strange precipitation in the Madonna-elevated chess queen.

²²⁵ Aaron J. Gurjewitsch: *Das Weltbild des mittelalterlichen Menschen*, Dresden 1978, S. 376, 385

